VAJRASŪCĪ OF AŚVAGHOṢA

and
The Concept of Varṇa-Jāti Through the Ages

Ramesh Bharadwaj

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Dedicated to

HE Rameshwar Thakur,

Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa,
who has recently promoted the first
Vedic University at Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh)

Prologue

Vajrasūcī is a small but unique text, written by Aśvaghoṣa, a great Buddhist scholar of Kuṣana period. This ancient treatise presents not only the criticism of Varṇa–Jāti system of Indian society and claims of social distinctions on the ground of birth, but also highlights the historical significance of an age-long debate of Indian social philosophy, specially the problem of social inequality. Prof. Lallanji rightly points out the wider relevance of the Vajrasūcī by saying, "It is not confined to the historical situation in Indian history and culture. It stares squarely into an attitude which may occur in any society and in any period." This text is like a holy book for those who wish to spread the message of social equality, dignity of the individual human being and qualities and noble conduct as the determining factors for the status of the individual in the society.

Accordingly, I have presented here the essence of the thoughts of two thousand five hundred years, opposing the institution of caste right from Buddhism to Gandhism. This unbroken continuous chain of thoughts of Indian thinkers in the socio-religious field has contributed to mitigation of rigidity of the caste system.

To understand the origin and initial character of the Varṇa system and its transformation into watertight compartments of the Jāti system I have explored the early Vedic to modern literature. A rational mind wants that in a social system mere lineage or descent in a particular family should not be taken

as the blind and invariable basis for assigning status and vocation; man should rather be provided suitably for his own qualities. Scholars think that the Varṇa system has taken into consideration not merely the biological, but also the moral, not merely the social, but also the individual factors.

Any social system should be conceived to make the best of the potentialities in the individual for social development. The ancient Varṇa system was not at all based on the factor of birth, as in vogue today. It was based on the rational sharing of certain functions in the society according to the inherent qualities capacities of a man. At the same time, man was also free to make progress and enter into a higher varṇa if he had merit and competence to do so. This was a sort of organic functional socialism, aimed to synthesize egoism and altruism. This research explores a social order where each man gets equal opportunity to develop his faculties and contributes to the aggregate life by using his capacities.

I am indeed greatful to a number of scholars who have read part or whole of the manuscript at various stages of its progress. Their comments and suggestion have proved extremely vital in finalising the text. In particular, I would like to thank Prof. Mohini Mathur, Prof. V.K. Jain, Sh. P.M. Tripathi and Prof. K. K. Sinha. My thanks are also due to all of my colleagues and library staff, specially at Sahitya Academi for providing a stimulating environment and valuable assistance.

Sannidhi, Rajghat
New Delhi

Ramesh Bharadwaj

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1
Introduction

1. Vajrasūcī and its Editions

Brian Honghton Hudgson (Resident, Nepal Darbar, 1833-1843) discovered a great number of Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts in Nepal. His discovery entirely revolutionized the history of Buddhism.

The total number of MSS. presented by Mr. Hodgson to the Asiatic Society of Bengal included 86 bundles, containing 170 separate works on various subjects. They vary in extent from a few ślokas to a hundred to twenty thousand stanzas. The great bulk of the works refers to the history, philosophy, morality, and rituals of the religion of Buddha; a few are devoted to miscellaneous subjects.

The character of these works was first noticed by Mr. Hodgson in his Essays. He was thus not only the discoverer of these most ancient and authentic records, but also the first intelligent exponent of their nature and value, both in their ritualistic and in their philosophical aspect. Burnouf very appropriately addressed him, in the dedication of his *Saddharma-pundarika,* as "comme fondateur de la veritable etude de Buddhisme." It should be added, however, that the plan adopted by Mr. Hodgson was to give the result of his researches, and not to describe at length the contents of the works found by him, and his notices, therefore, served more to excite than to allay curiosity in regard to those texts.[1]

1. Rajendralal Mitra, The Sanskrit Buddhist literature of Nepal, p xxiv (Preface), N. Delhi 1981 (IInd Edition.)

Out of these manuscripts the Vajrasūcī was given the No. B. 34.[1] This text was presented to Hodgson first by an old learned Buddhist in Nepal in 1829.

The work has been translated, in a very spirited style, 'into English by Mr. B. H. Hodgson, and published in the' Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain,' and also in his 'Essays on the Language, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet (London, 1874 pp.126f.), Mr. Hodgson writes the name of the author Ashughosha, but the MS. gives it as I have put it above. The meaning of the name is "he who has the voice" (*ghosha*) "of a horse" (*aśva*).

It was reproduced by John Wilson in "Indian Caste", (Bombay, 1877 , pp. 296–305). The text was first printed by L. *Willkinson* in 1839 with *Laghuṭanka* (being a reply to the Vajrasūcī) of an orthodox Pundit Soobojee Bapoo.[2]

---

1. Substance, Nepalese yellow paper, 10 X 3 inches, Folio, 9. Lines on a page, 6. Extent in slokas, 140. Charac ter, Newari Date, (?) Appearance, old. Prose. Correct.
2. देशे मालवनामकेऽत्र नगरी भूपालनाम्नी ---विल्किन्सन्निति साहिबो विजयते तस्याश्रितायां सभामध्येऽभूल्लघुटंक एष विदुषां तोषाय । Further Bapoo gives the period of his writing in following verse:-"नंदबाणगिरिचंद्रसंमिते शालिवाहनशकेऽयने वरे। "अश्वयुग्धवलपंचमी बुधे टंक एष खलु निर्मितो लघुः" चन्द्र=1, नंद=7, बाण=5, गिरि=9 = 1759 Year of Salivahana Saka Calender + 78 = 1837A.D. Note : Prof. Lallanji Gopal says in references (No. 6) that Willkinson got his copy of the text from a Brāhmaṇa of Nasik. But it seems to me that Willkinson introduced the text matter of Vajrasūcī to his dependent Pundit in Bhopal and on request of Pundit he provided a copy of the text., Because Willkinson and Hodgson both were English civil officers, this was very easy for him to get a copy of that. And later on Pundit Soobaji Bapu wrote a reply to Vajrasūcī on orthodox Brahmin line in 1837. This reply – Laghuṭanka (Small Hatchetor Stone Cutter's Chisel) with original text of Vajrasūcī was published by Willkinson in 1839.

Laghuṭanka

The writer of *Laghuṭanka* Pt. Soobajee Bapoo clearly indicates in the end of his work that he was one of the members of a council of scholars who were dependent on Willkinson an English officer of Bhopal city of Malava region.

These lines give a reference that Willkinson provided a copy of this manuscript to Pt. Bapoo and after that he wrote a scholastic reply to Vajrasūcī in 1837, which was published in 1839.

The next Edition was published by A. Weber with translation and notes in German language in 1859.[1]

In 1949-50 S. K. Mukherjee published a critical edition with the help of six manuscripts, which appeared in Visva–Bharati Annals.[2] There are two Hindi translations of Vajrasūcī one by R. P. Dwivedi[3] and second by Sanghsen.[4] Dr. J. Takakusu also translated it into Japanese language.

The present edition is based upon the edition of 1839, a copy of which I recieved from an American friend of mine in Japan while I was studying at Tokyo university as a visiting scholar in 1982.

2. Authorship

The *Vajrasūcī* is attributed to Aśvaghoṣa.The Text declares that this work is written by Aśvaghoṣa. Mr. B. H. Hodgson, the discoverer of this manuscript, is convinced of this in his "*Essays*".[5]

Prof. E. H. Johnston[6] in the introduction of his critical

1. Ed. and Trs. by A. Weber, "iibar die Vajrasūcī, in Abhandl. d. Berliner Akad, 1859
2. Vol. II, 1949, pp. 125–84. Later in 1950 it was published separately as Sino–Indian Studies, Shantiniketan.
3. Chaukhamba Amarbharati Prakashan, Varansi, 1985 (Text with translation and notes)
4. Delhi, 1982 (Text with Hindi translation).
5. pp. 126f.
6. E. H. Johnston, Acts of Buddha, Introduction, p. xxii, Calcutta, 1936.

edition of *Buddhacaritam* (Acts of the Buddha) says that the Vajrasūcī, a clever piece of polemic arguing against Brāhmaṇa claims, shows no trace of Aśvaghoṣa's style or thought.

It is also not mentioned among Aśvaghoṣa's works by the Chinese pilgrim Yi-tsing (7th Century) nor by the Bstan - hgyur. Chinese translation, which was made between 973 and 981 A D, ascribes it to Dharmakīrti. S. K. Mukherji hazards the suggestion that it was possibly a Chinese translation of a commentary on the *Vajrasūcī*, or may be even a different text, a similar work of the same nature, probably an adaptation of the original *Vajrasūcī* by Dharmayasas (Dharmkīrti).

The text unequivocally mentions in the introductory verse and the colophon that this is a composition of Aśvaghoṣa. Its Buddhist stance is undisputed and the opposition to the Brāhmaṇical social system is equally unsuspect.

The same theme of social equality or condemanation of caste-system and superiority of Brāhmaṇa, we find in fragments of *Śāriputra-Prakaraṇa*. In *Śāriputra Prakaraṇa*, Śāriputra has an interview with Aśvajit when he comes to hear about the Buddha. He then discusses the claims of the Buddha to be a teacher with his friend, the Vidūṣaka, who raises the objection that a Brāhmaṇa like Śāriputra should not accept the teachings of a Kṣatriya. Śāriputra does not heed the objection and he and his friend, Maudgalyāyana, go to the Buddha and recieve instructions.

Aśvaghoṣa is very much influenced by the stories, thought and phraseology of the *Mahābhārata* in *Buddhacharita* and *Saundarananda* as described by Johnston in his introduction (pp. xlvi – xlvii). In *Vajrasūcī* also he quotes from the Mahābhārata in the concluding part.

Rahul Sankrityayan *(Volga se Ganga)* sees an autobiographical element in the *Vajrasūcī*. According to him

Aśvaghoṣa, in referring to the birth of some renowned sages from non-Brāhmaṇa mothers (verses 22–26), wanted to plead with his mother in support of his own love for Prabha, a foreigner .

Some scholars may say that in the introductory verse the writer referes to Manjughoṣa, a deity of Buddhists of later age, therefore it can not be a writing of 1st century. But I have stated in a footnote of the English translation of the text [p.105], that according to Alex Wayman, Manjuśrī cult was well established by the 1st or 2nd century.

Prof. Lallanji Gopal says "Sanskrit scholars find it difficult to accept the *Vajrasūcī* as a creation of Aśvaghoṣa. They argue that 'there is hardly anything in its form and content that may conclusively prove it to be a work of such a gifted poet as Aśvaghoṣa.' Aśvaghoṣa has to his credit two literary masterpieces *Buddhacarita* and *Saundarananda*. Aśvaghoṣa was a versatile genius. He was not a mere poet. He was greater still as a philosopher and a scholar. It would be unfair to expect the philosopher Aśvaghoṣa to remain the poet Aśvaghoṣa at one and the same time. The present text has a purpose. As a work of social philosophy it has to argue in favour of a point employing all the skills of a forceful pleading. Its author cannot be expected to demonstrate the charms of literary embellishments in the form, content, style and expression. A writer has to adopt the requirements of the *genre* of work in which he is composing. Here it is pertinent to note the opinion of S. Levi about the *Mahāyāna śraddhotpādaśāstra*, another work written by Aśvaghoṣa , 'The poet of the *Buddhacharita* shows himself here as a profound metaphysician, as an intrepid reviver of a doctrine, which was destined to regenerate Buddhism.' Criticism of the caste system occurs in Aśvaghoṣa's two other works, the *Buddhacharita* and the *Sūtralankara*. There is, thus, nothing incongruous in Aśvaghoṣa being the author of the *Vajrasūcī*."[1]

---

1. Aśvaghoṣa's Vajrasūcī, Introduction, pp. 14-15, Calcutta, 1995

Above statements show that scholars of Aśvaghoṣa and his school generally agree that Aśvaghoṣa had nothing to do with its composition. But majority of the scholars think that Vajrasūcī is the work of Aśvaghoṣa.

3. The Life and Date of Aśvaghoṣa

Aśvaghoṣa was the first outstanding Buddhist author (a poet and a philosopher) of classical Sanskrit literature. In the colophons of his well-known three works *Buddhacharita*, *Saundarananda* and *Śāriputraprakaraṇa* he describes himself as Sāketaka a native of Sāketa. As the son of Suvarṇākṣi or he was given the title of Ācharya and Bhadanta . Tradition also tells that he was originally a Brāhmaṇa and that he first adhered to the Sarvastivāda school of Buddhism. There are different opinions amongst Indological scholars about his date. We may summarise herebelow the point of views of some these scholars :-

1. Traditional View

According to Indian tradition, Aśvaghoṣa was a Brāhmaṇa of Sāket, who was converted to the Buddhism. He first adhered to Sarvastivadin school of Buddhist philosophy and later on he was attracted by Mahāyāna and became one of the main founders of Mahāyānic thought. I-tsing (a Chinese traveller, 6.71-95 AD) refers to Aśvaghoṣa as a great teacher of the past whose works were still studied in his time.

Indian and Chinese traditions also associate him with Kaniṣka and say that Vibhāṣa, the great Sarvastivādin commentary on the Abhidhamma was composed by him in the general council held in the reign of Kushan King.[1]

Chinese Tradition:-[2]

Aśvaghoṣa (c. first to second centuries A.D.) was a well-known Buddhist poet, philosopher, and Mahāyāna

1. E.H. Johnston, p. XVi-XVii, Introduction, Acts of Buddha, Part II
2. Li RongXI, Taisho, Vol. 50, No. 2046 (Lives of Great Monks and Nuns, pp. 5-13)

theorist of India, and is considered as the eleventh patriarch in the line of succession of the Dharma beginning with Mahākaśyapa. This concise *Life of Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattava* gives only a brief account of how he was converted from Brāhmaṇism to Buddhism by Pārśva but, according to the *Record of the Origin of Transmitting the Dharma-pitaka (Fu-fa-zang-yin--yuan-zhuan,* Taisho 2058), his predecessor was Pārśva's successor, Puṇyayaśas.

In the history of the development of Buddhism, Aśvaghoṣa is considered as one of the founders of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The following eight texts, which are extant in Chinese translations in the Taisho edition of the Tripitaka, are attributed to him:

Buddhacaritakāvya, translated by Kumārajīva (Taisho 201).

Sūtra of the six ways of Transmigration -Saḍgatikārika), one fascicle, translated by Sūryakīrti (Taisho 726).

Sūtra of the ten Evil Deeds (Daśakuśalakarmapātha), one fascicle, translated by Sūryakīrti (Taisho 727).

Sūtra of the Nirgrantha Inquiring into the Meaning of Non-ego (Nairātmyaparipṛccha), one fascicle, translated by Sūryakīrti (Taisho 1643).

Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra, two Chinese translations, one by Sikṣānanda, one fascicle, (Taisho 1666), and the other by Paramārtha, two fascicles, (Taisho 1667).

Da-zong-di-xuan-wen-ben-lun, twenty fascicles, translated by Paramārtha (Taisho 1669).

Fifty Stanzas on Serving the Guru (Gurusevādharmapancāsadgātha), one fascicle translated by Sūryakīrti (Taisho 1687).

Among these eight texts, the *Buddhacharitakavya* and the *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra* are perhaps the most popular among Mahāyāna Buddhists, although the authenticity of the latter text is a subject much debated by Buddhist scholars.

Besides being a Buddhist theorist with significant influence on the development of Mahāyāna Buddhism, Aśvaghoṣa was also the initiator of Buddhist chanting and hymn singing. In order to propagate Buddhism, he wrote many melodious stanzas and songs, which were said to be so sweet and pleasant to the ear that many people were converted to Buddhism upon hearing them. It is still the practice of Buddhist monks, in both Theravadin and Mahāyāna countries, to chant stanzas and hymns in praise of the Triple Gem in their daily ceremonies and at special religious functions.

In the *Biographi of Dharma Master Vasubandhu* (Taisho 2049), Aśvaghoṣa is said to be a native of Sāketa in Srāvasti. He was invited to Kashmir by Kātyayaniputra to take part in the compilation of the *Abhidharmavibhāsa-śāstra* (Taisho 1546), which consisted of one million stanzas and was completed in twelve years under the auspices of King Kaniṣka.

2. Sh. Satish Chandra Vidyabhushana says that Kaniṣka {AD 320} was the patron of Aśvaghoṣa.[1]

3. Thomas[2] identfies him with Matṛceta, supposedly a contemporary of Kaniṣka. Tradition also unquestionably confirms these views.

4. A.B. Keith in his *History of Sanskrit Literature*[3] puts doubts on this and presents a factual argument that the *Sūtrālaṃkāra* is his. He tells two stories in which Kaniṣka's reign seems to be referred to as in the past; this may be explained either on the theory that Kaniṣka died before him, which does not accord with tradition, or on the view that the stories are interpolated in whole or as regards the name, or that there was an earlier Kaniṣka. Again an inscription held to belong to the time of Kaniṣka mentions an Aśvaghoṣarāja

1. S.C. Vidyabhushan,, POCP,1919,I, xxxiii ff.
2. T. p. 25-29
3. A.B.Keith, Hist. of Skt. Litt., p. 111

who has been temerariously indentified with the poet. Accepting the validity of the tradition, Keith decides the date of Aśvaghoṣa to be that of Kaniṣka, for whom CAD 100 still seems a just estimate.

5. D.D. Kosambi also shared this stand and places him within the first century AD, on the assumption of a single author of the name.[1]

6. Prof. Ui[2] says that Nāgārjuna lived about 750-850 A.N. "The date of the Nirvana held by Kumārajīva (2) and his disciples is 637 B.C. Hence we conclude the following dates: Aśvaghoṣa lived about 13 AD, Nāgārjuna about 113-213, AD, Deva about 163-263 AD, and Harivarman about 260-270 AD.

7. Professor Luder holds that the hand writing of the manuscript fragments which contain all that is left to us of the Śāriputra-Prakaraṇa must belong to the times of the Kushan kings, probably to the reign of Kaniṣka or Huviska.[3]

8. E. H. Johnston says[4], the evidence then leads to the conclusion that the poet lived not later than the time of Kaniṣka and may have preceded him, and is thus consonant with what, we know of his relation to classical Sanskrit literature. His style proves him to have lived several centuries before Kālidāsa. He is imitated by Bhāsa, and his vocabulary suggests a date not far removed from that of the *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya. The problem would have been much more complicated if the *Kalpanāmandītīka* was really by Aśvaghoṣa, but it is post Kaniṣka and alludes also to the *Vaiśeṣikasūtras,* a system unknown to the genuine extant

1. D.D.Kosambi, p. Ixxi, Introduction of " The Subhasitaratna kosa", Harvard University Press, 1957
2. Ui, Hakuju The Vaisesika Philosophy, London, Royal Asiatic Society, 1917, p. 42-432
3. H. Luder, Bruchstucke buddhistischer Dramen {Berling, 1911}. 11
4. E.H. Johnston, p. XVI-XVII, Introduction, Acts of Buddha, Part II

works. But as I reject the attribution to him of this collection of tales, I need not try to reconcile the irreconcilable. The question remains of the date of Kaniṣka, and if agreement is not yet reached on this thorny point, of variations are no longer large, most scholars accept a date in the last quarter of the first century AD and none places him later than the second quarter of the second century.

4. Works of Aśvaghoṣa

Thomas gives the extant works of Aśvaghoṣa in Sanskrit and Tibetan as follows: **Kāvyas**-1.Buddhacharita 2. Saundarananda **Play** 3. Śāriputraprakaraṇa{ed. Luders}, **Stotra**- 4. Gāndīstotra { transliterated back from the Chinese canon}and 5. Vajrasūcī .

A.B. Keith adds following two more to this list : Sūtrālaṁkāra and Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda (a famous text-book of early Mahāyāna views).

Prof. Kimura[1] thinks that there were two Aśvaghoṣa because the Bhūtatathāta Pratityasamutpāda doctrine of Aśvaghoṣa II or the doctrine of Phenomenon rising from suchness (existence as such) is quite defferent from the philosophical approach of Aśvaghoṣa I, he describes as it follows:

Śāstras which are composed by Aśvaghoṣa I

1. Sūtrālaṁkāra Śāstra Translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva, about AD 405 of the Tsin- dynasty (AD 384-417).

2. Buddhacharita Kāvyam, translated into Chinese by Dharmarakṣa, AD 414-421 of the Northern Lian dynasty (AD 397-439).

3. Dāsaduṣta - Karmamārga Śāstra, translated by Zin-kan (Suryayasa?) AD 1004-1008 of later Sun dynasty (AD 960-1127).

1. "The Original and Developed Doctrines of Indian Buddhism" (In Charts) by RYUKAN KIMURA, Univ. of Calcutta, 1920, p. 30, 65

4. Ṣaḍnimnagati - Cakra - Pravartana Śāstra, translated by Zikkan, date is not known.

5. Śāstra on the meaning of the Anātama in Dharma, translated by Zin-kan; date is not known.

6. Saundarananda kāvyam, printed in Bibliothtica Indica Series. (p. 30)

Śāstra composed by Aśvaghoṣa II

1. Mahāyāna-Śraddhotpāda-Śāstra, a wellknown systematical work of suchness philosophy.

5. His Thought and Contribution

The evidence of his works makes it clear that he had a considerable mastery over the technical literature which a Sanskrit poet was expected to possess, and a much wider acquaintance than most other Buddhist writers of the various branches of Brāhmaṇical learning. His Sanskrit is not strictly faultless, but his easy command over it is undoubtedly not inferior to that of most Sanskrit writers. Everywhere great respect is shown to Brāhmaṇical ideas and institutions, and it is not improbable that he was born a Brāhmaṇa and given a Brāhmaṇa's education before he went over to Buddhism.[1] The obvious interest he shows in the theme fortifies this presumption. Scholars think that he was a follower of Hīnayāna and took his stand on earlier dogmatism, but he was less of a scholastic philosopher than an earnest believer, and his emphasis on personal love and devotion to the Buddha perhaps prepared the way for Mahāyāna Bhakti, of which he is enumerated as one of the patriarchs. It is not necessary to linger over the question of his scholarship or religion; but it should be noted that, while his wide scholarship informs his poems with a richer content, it seldom degenerates into mere pedantry, and the sincerity of his religious convictions imparts

1. As discussed by Johnston in detail under title " The Scholar", p. xliv

life and enthusisasm to his impassioned utterances, and redeems them from being mere dogmatic treatises or literary exercises.

Prof. S.N. Dasgupta describing the aesthetic quality of his poetry says :- "From the literary point of view, Aśvaghoṣa's achievement, we have seen, is marked not so much by crudity and primitiveness as by simplicity and moderation in language and sytle; it is artistic but not in the extravagant manner of the later Kāvya. Its matter and poetic quality are therefore, more appealing than its manner and artistic effect.[1]

Aśvaghoṣa's versatility can be clearly seen in his third work, a Prakaraṇa or nine-act drama, entitled *Śāriputra-prakaraṇa* (or *Saradvaliputra*), of which only fragments on palm leaf were discovered in Central Asia and a few passages were restored by Luders. Fortunately the colophon exists, and the question of authorship and name of the work is beyond doubt. its theme is, again, the practice of conversion connected with the Buddha, namely, that of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, but the fragments give us little idea of the way in which the story, well-known from such older sources as the *Mahāvagga*, was handled.

The *Vajrasūcī* is a small but unique text, which has a great significane in the Indian Culture specially in the history of the social thought of varṇa-jāti. The ideas, arguments and thoughts of the *Vajrasūcī* provide rational and humanitarian vision to those who create social discrimination on the basis of birth in the society. The theme of the text is the claim that the Brāhmaṇavarṇa is superior to among all varṇas. The author presents his arguments systematically on the basis of quotations from the opponents' scriptures like Veda, Smṛtis and Mahābhārata. And concludes that Brāhmaṇahood can not be identified with the soul, birth, occupation etc., there is only

1. History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 78

one varṇa and on account of the difference in their specific action, the division into four was established. Prof. Lallanji Gopal, admiring the role of this text in the social history of mankind, says:

' The *Vajrasūcī*[1] deserves a wider circulation and recognition at the hands of liberal people subscribing to the ideas of equality of all human beings. It will inspire people fighting against all forms of discrimination on grounds of caste, creed or race. No doubt, there have been many enlightened thinkers in different countries and different periods, who have rebelled against claims of superiority on grounds of birth alone and have laboured to establish the principle of equality. In India also there are texts which devote a few pages or even a chapter to a discussion of these problems. But Aśvaghoṣa is entitled to a prominent mention, being the first to compose a full text exclusively on the theme of equality of all beings and a criticism of superiority on grounds of birth.'

6. Subject Matter of Vajrasūcī

The text begins with a homage to the Buddhist deity Manjughoṣa. The main theme of the text is the claim that the Brāhmaṇa varna is the highest among all Varṇas. Then the statement that " what is meant by the Brāhmaṇa" remains to be examined. Is it a Jīva (living being)? Is Jāti (caste) a Brāhmaṇa? Is it a body (Śarīra)? Is it knowledge (Jñāna)? Is conduct a Brāhmaṇa? Is occupation or the Knowledge of Vedas a Brāhmaṇa?

Then the author examines the stated explanations one by one as follows:–

1. A living being (Jīva) can not be a Brāhmaṇa. He quotes from Veda, Mahābhārata and Mānavadharma and concludes that no Jīva can be a Brāhmaṇa.

1. Vajrasūcī of Aśvaghoṣa, Preface, p. 32

2. In accordance with the Smṛtis the author says that there will be no Brāhmaṇa by caste because a lot of sages, like Agastya, Vaśiṣtha etc. were not Brāhmaṇa by birth. Manu also said that "by selling flesh, milk etc. a Brāhmaṇa becomes Śūdra with in three days. Therefore there is no Brāhmaṇa by Jāti.

3. If the body is Brāhmaṇa then the stain of the murder of a Brāhmaṇa will accrue to the son who burns the body of his father. And the six duties i.e. prayer, studies, teaching, charitable donations - dāna etc. and fruits thereof will be destroyed, but it does not happen so.

4. Because of knowledge one can not be a Brāhmaṇa. Sometimes Śūdras also get mastery over the Śāstras but they are not called Brāhmaṇa.

5. By conduct also one can not be a Brāhmaṇa. There are so many Śūdras with good conduct and character but they are not called Brāhmaṇa.

6. There are many Kṣatriya though blessed with the virtues of all six duties of Brāhmaṇa like study, teaching donations etc. but they are not accepted as Brāhmaṇa, so by virtue of deeds also no one is a Brāhmaṇa.

7. Because of the knowledge of the Veda no one can be a Brāhmaṇa. Rāvaṇa and other Rākṣasas having acquired the knwoledge of Vedas were not accepted as Brāhmaṇa.

1. Who indeed is Brāhmaṇa?

The author declares that Brāhmaṇahood represents a stage in spiritual advancement. It is the removal of all sins; it is white and pure like the Kunda flower and moon, which can not be acquired by saṁskāra or caste or clan or the Veda or deeds. This Brāhmaṇahood is attained by observing religious vows (vrata), austerity (tapas), voluntary religous observance (niyama), fasting (upavāsa), donation (dāna), self-restraint (dama), mental quietness (śama) and restraint (saṃyama). He

is a Brāhmaṇa who is without selfishness, ego, attachment and coveting and is free from lust and ill will. Enumerating the characteristics of a Brāhmaṇa, as opposed to a Chāndāla, the text identifies Brahma with truth, austerity, control over the senses and compassion towards all beings and adds that he does not cohabit.

2. Role of Śūdras

(a) When orthodoxy states that Śūdras cannot take Pravrajyā and their only duty is to serve Brāhmaṇa etc. and they are lowest being mentioned at the end of the list of the four varṇas. This argument is unfair because in language such compounds are made and words occuring last one not the lowest.

(b) He says that Brāhmaṇahood is not fixed by birth, through austerity the Śūdra also can attain that status, hence birth is not the determining factor. There were many sages like Katha, Nārada etc. who were though Śūdras by birth achieved the Brāhmaṇahood by good deeds.

3. There is only one Varṇa

He states that there is only one Varṇa and the classification into four varṇas is not correct. When Veda says four Varṇas were born from the body of a creator, then how can the children of one father be divided into four classes. There are specific differences in animals i.e. cow, horse etc. but how can it be in the case of human beings. There is marked differences in the shape, vagina, penis, colour and body etc. of animals, but we never find such distinctions in human beings.

In the same way trees belong to different species, but there is no difference of species in Brāhmaṇas etc. There is similarity in their body parts. They have also similar feelings of pleasure and fear etc. So there should be only one Varṇa.

4. By quoting from a dialogue of Yudhisthira and Vaiśampāyana from the Mahābhārata the author concludes that the four Varṇa system depends on virtuous conduct, not on birth. He defines Brāhmaṇahood with five characteristics.

The last verse of the text proclaims the principal motive for its writing. It declares that the statements in the text are meant to destroy the delusion of the Brāhmaṇas who have lost all their senses. And this thought of his will be accepted by those who are pious persons.

6.1 Similar Thought in other books

6.1.1 Vajrasūcī Upaniṣad

Vajrasūcī Upaniṣad borrows the central theme of the Vajrasūcī and presents a similar thought in Vedāntic style, it differs from the other Upaniṣads in its style and manner of presentation. In this text we find quotations from the Mahābhārata, Manu and Śukra. Prof. Lallanji Gopal comparing this Upaniṣad with Vajrasūcī comments " This latter text is a later composition. It is a Brāhmaṇical adaptation of the early portions of the Buddhist text Vajrasūcī. There are, no doubt, some similarities in the two texts in regard to several terms, expressions and points. The present Upaniṣad has the limited scope of determining the identifying marks of a Brāhmaṇa, whereas our text covers many more points. The arguments in the Upaniṣad are better organised and more explicit than those in the Vajrasūcī. There are major differences between the two texts on some points. Thus, the characteristic qualities of a Brāhmaṇa in the two compositions have several significant variations.

TRANSLATION OF VAJRASUCI UPANIṢAD

We now proceed to declare the Vajrasūcī the weapon that destroyes ignorance, condemns the ignorant and praises the man of divine vision.

There are four Varṇas (classes) the Brāhmaṇa, the Kṣatriya, the Vaiśya, and the Śūdra. Even the Smṛtis declare in accordance with Vedas that the Brāhmaṇa is the most important of them.

But it remains to be examined as to what is meant by the Brāhmaṇa? Is it a Jīva? Is it a body? Is it a Class? Is it Jñāna (knowledge)? Is it Karma (deeds)? Or is it a doer of Dharma?

To begin with: is Jīva the Brāhmaṇa? No. Since the Jīva is the same in many past and future bodies (of all persons), and since the Jīva is the same in all of the many bodies obtained through the force of karma, therefore Jīva is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Then, is the body the Brāhmaṇa? No. Since the body, as it is made up of the five elements, is the same for all people down to Chāndalas (the lowest caste) etc., since old age and death, Dharma and Adharma are found to be common to them all, since there is no absolute distinction that the Brāhmaṇas are white-coloured, the Kṣatriyas red, the Vaiśyas yellow, and the Śūdras dark, and since in burning the corpse of his father, etc., the stain of the murder of a Brāhmaṇa, etc., will accrue to the son, etc., therefore the body is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Then, is a class the Brāhmaṇa? No. Since many great Ṛṣis have sprung from other classes and orders of creation- Ṛṣyaśṛnga was born of deer; Kauśika, of kuśa grass; Jambūka of a jackal; Vālmiki of valmika (an ant-hill); Vyāsa of a fisherman's daughter; Gautama, of the posteriors of a hare; Vaśiṣtha of Urvaśi; and Agastya of a water-pot. Of these, many Ṛṣis (Sages) outside the caste even have stood first among the teachers of divine Wisdom; therefore a class is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Is Jñāna (knowledge) the Brāhmaṇa? No. Since there were many Kṣatriyas and others well versed in the cognition of divine Truth, therefore Jñāna is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Then is Karma (coduct) the Brāhmaṇa? No. Since the Prārabdha (the fruit of last birth, which is being enjoyed in present life), Sanchita (karmic affinities generated in the last birth and collected together, will be enjoyed in future lives), and Āgami (the fruit of present conduct and will be enjoyed in future birth) karmas are the same for all beings, and since all people perform their actions as impelled by karma, therefore karma is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Then is a doer of dharma (virtuous actions) the Brāhmaṇa? No. Since there are many Kṣatriyas, who are givers of gold, therefore a doer of virtuous actions is not the Brāhmaṇa.

Who indeed then is Brāhmaṇa? Whoever he may be but he is the one who has directly realised his Ātma (Soul) and who is directly cognizant, like the myrobalan in his palm, of his Ātma that is without a second, that is devoid of class and actions, that is free from the faults of the six stains (hunger, thirst, grief, confusion, old age and death) and the six changes (Ṣadbhāva Vikāra-birth existence etc.), that is of the nature of truth, knowledge, bliss, and eternity, that is without any change in itself, that is the substratum of all the kalpas (divine duration of time), that exists penetrating all things that pervades everything within and without as Ākaśa {sky }, that is of nature of undivided bliss, that cannot be reasoned about and that is known only by direct cognition. He, who by the reason of having obtained his wishes is devoid of the faults of thirst after worldly objects and passions, who is the possessor of the qualifications beginning with śama, dama, uprati, titikṣa, samādhāna and śraddha, who is free from emotion, malice, thirst after worldly objects, desire, delusion, etc., whose mind is untouched by pride, egoism, etc., who possesses all these qualities and means, he only is a Brāhmaṇa.

Such is the opinion of the Vedas, the Smṛtis, the Itihāsa and the Purāṇas. (Otherwise one cannot obtain the status of a Brāhmaṇa). One should meditate on his Ātma (Soul) as Sachchidānada, and the non-dual Brahman. Yes, one should meditate on his Ātma as the Sachchidānanda Brahman. Thus says the Upaniṣad.

6.1.2 ŚĀRDULAKARṆA AVADĀNA

The Story of Śārdulakarna points out in detail the utter fatuity of relying on caste distinctions.[1] The Śārdulakarṇā vadana has a remarkable similarity in the style of presenting the arguments and in the choice of terms and elaborations with the Vajrasūcī.

The story:

In a forest on the banks of the Ganges there dwelt Triśanku, a Chāndāla, who was the chief of ten thousand of his caste men. He had, in a former term of existence, studied the Vedas, the Itihāsas, the Śāstras and other branches of knowledge, and remembered them in his present life. He had a son named Śārdulakarṇa, and to him he taught all that he remembered of his previous learning. The youth thereby became proficient in every accomplishment. Triśanku thought of a Brāhmaṇa, named Pushkarasari, who had an only daughter, thoroughly accomplished, and in every way worthy of his son. Next morning, followed by a large retinue, he proceeded to the abode of this Brāhmaṇa, and was well received; but when he made his request his host upbraided him for his presumption in asking the hand of a Brāhmaṇa girl for a Chāndāla youth, and this led to a long discussion on caste distinctions.

1. The work profeses to be a part of the Divya Avadāna. It was translated into Chinese by Tehu-ja-hu, of the Western Tsin dynasty in 265 A. D. Its Chinese name is *She-tau-keen-king*.

Triśanku said: " There is a marked distinction between ashes and gold, but there is nothing of the kind between a Brāhmaṇa and a person of another caste. A Brāhmaṇa is not produced like fire by the friction of dry wood; he descends not from the sky, nor from the wind, nor does he arise, piercing the earth. The Brāhmaṇa is brought forth from the womb exactly in the same way as a Chāndāla. When he dies he causes impurity exactly as other castes do : there is not the least difference in the case. Brāhmaṇas, longing for flesh-meat, commit most cruel sacrifices., They say that goats and the like, by being sanctified by Mantras, go to heaven after slaughter. If this be the way to heaven, why don't they send their fathers, mothers, sisters, and the rest to heaven by the same expeditious way? Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra are mere names, and imply no specific distinctions. All human beings have feet, thighs, nails, flesh, sides, and back exactly alike; there is not the slightest difference in any respect, and therefore there cannot be four differenct species. Even as boys, playing on the highway, take a quantity of dust, and, dividing it into different parts, call one part water, another milk, another curds, another flesh-meat, another Ghi, and so on, but the dust does not thereby become any of those articles. So Brāhmaṇa etc., are mere names, and do not imply four distinct species. In animals, like the cow, the horse, and the like, there are marked differences in shape, and thereby the cow, the horse and the rest constitute distinct species. In the same way mangoes, hog-plums (*Spondias magnifera*), rose-apples, dates and the rest belong to different species; but there being no difference of shape in Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, etc., there can be no difference of species. Devas become Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas Yakṣas, Vaiśyas, Nagas, Śūdras and Asuras. Had there been any truth in the doctrine of the Śruti that Brāhmaṇas produce Brāhmaṇas, and Vaiśyas produce Vaiśyas, there would certainly have been some

specific marks. Moreover, every member of the four castes can attain heaven by the merit of his own actions, and there is no let or hindrance with reference to particular castes; surely therefore there are no specific distinctions of castes. Among men those who plough paddy-fields, sow seeds, and raise crops are called Kṣatriyas. Those who, giving up marriage, retire to the wilderness, build huts of leaves, and pass their days in contemplation, are called Brāhmaṇas. Among Brāhmaṇas, those who go to the village and teach Mantras are called Adhyāpakas. Those men who, calculating upon profit, undertake commercial transactions, are called Vaiśyas. Those who earn their livelihood by petty works are called Śūdras. Those who feel disposed to conduct the work of chariots and of elephants get the name of Mātangas. Those who plough are called Karshakas. Those who trade are named Vaniks. Those who retire from home and accept asceticism are named Pravrajitas. Those who by their good conduct gratify people are called kings. In none of these is there any specific organic distinction." By these and other arguments he silenced the Brāhmaṇa, who, thereupon, asked him, "Do you know the Sāvitri (Gāyatrī)"?

Triśanku said, "Yes I do, and also the origin of it. A long time ago, a Ṛṣi, named Vasu married Kapilā, the daughter of a Nakṣatra. By devotion to her he lost his vigour, and to regain it he repeated the Sāvitrī: *"Bhūr bhūvar yat saviur na kapilāya bhargo devasya dhīmahi."* The Sāvitrī of the Kṣatriyas is: *"Om! jātilastapaso-bhūta gahanam vanamaśritā, &c."* That of the Vaiśya is Om chittamahi sahite vaiśya kanyaka, &c." That of the Śūdra is *"Om! ātapah sutapah jīvedaham varshaśatam pasyedaham śāradam s'atam."*

The Brāhmaṇa questioned Triśanku about the Nakṣatras, their positions, stars, &c., about the planets, and many recondite questions about astrology and interpretations of omens; to all of which the interrogated gave very satisfactory replies.

The Brāhmaṇa, thus overcome in every way, at last gave away, notwithstanding the opposition of his disciples and pupils, his daughter to Śārdūlakarṇa.[1]

6.1.3 The Chāvaka-Jātaka

The Chāvaka-Jātaka (No. 309, Jat III-27-30) tells the story of a gluttonous Brāhmaṇa who violates the sacred prescription that the teacher must not sit on a lower seat than his pupil, in favour of the king who provides excellent food and an easy life for him. The anti Brāhmaṇanical tendency of the story is poignantly enhanced by the device that its real hero, who exposses and corrects the Brāhmaṇa, is chāvaka (chapaka> śavapāka)[2].

7. Varṇa-Jāti SystemThrough the Ages

Let us now look at Chāturvarṇa or caste system from the Vedic age to the modern era as it is depicted in the literature of those ages. This will show how it came to be what it was and also that such divisions prevailed in other societies of the world.

Traditional Indian life is primarily based on a system of class division, which is denoted by two terms, Varṇa (lit. colour, character, nature and quality-M.Williams) and Jāti (the form of existence fixed by birth-Apte). The Indian people are thus broadly divided into four groups, the Brāhmaṇas (the pristely class), the Kṣatriyas (the knightly order),the Vaiśyas (the businessmen and traders) and the Śūdras (the class that served the others).

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1. M. Burnouf has givin an abstract of the story in his Introduction to Indian Buddhism, pp. 205É.
2. "The Impious Brāhmaṇa and the Pious chandala" Buddhist studies in Honour of 1.B. Horner, Edited by : L. Cousins, A. kunst, and K. R. Norman, Published by : D. REIDEL Publishing company Boston, U.S.A. 1974 p. 9-11 A

7.1 Early Period

7.1.1 Vedic Age:

The oldest text of this era is the Ṛgveda. This text (VIII, 35, 16–18) mentions three classes as Brāhma, Kṣatra and Viś. Bṛhaspati hymn of Ṛgveda (4-50-8) mentioned two varṇas viz. The Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya. In later hymns[1] (of Xth Mandala) the Purusasūkta which referes clearly to four orders (chāturvarṇa) of society as Brāhmaṇa. Rājanya, Vaiśya and Śūdra, who are said to have come from the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet of the Creator respectively.

The Taittrīya Saṃhitā ascribes the origin of those four classes as above and also says that God had created certain deities simaltaneosly with social classes.[2] We find that in Vedic age there were no restrictions as regards particular occupations for persons belonging to a particular Varṇa. A sage says [3] "I am a poet, my father is a physician, my mother a grinder of corn." Thus there is no trace of heredity defining the occupation of an individual. Interdining and intermarriage were common to all varṇas such as we find in the later literature. As per the research of Dutt, during the Vedic period, the Varṇas seem to have been 'open classes.' They were not water tight compartments, the membership of which was determined by virtue of heredity only, more based on individual traits and less upon descent.[4]

The Varṇa system in the Brāhmanial age was a transition between the laxity of the Saṃhitā period and the rigidity of the post-Vedic era. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa clearly mentions four varṇas.[5] This distinction was not only among human beings

1. Zimmer and other scholars said that this hymn was a later interpolation.–Colebroke. Miscellaneous Essays, i, p. 309 note.
2. Muir, J., Originet Skt. Texts, Vol. I, 1872. p. 16
3. Ṛg. i, 161, 1–5
4. Dutt; "Origin and Growth of Caste in India," Vol. I, pp. 68--69
5. चत्वारो वै वर्णाः, SB, 5-5-4-9

but also among gods, in the animal world and the vegetable kingdom.[1]

Brāhmaṇa literature firstly recorded the duties of the four varṇas, which indicated that this division was according to their calling and all the four classes taken together made up the organic whole of the social structure. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa lays down different sizes of the funeral mound for the four classes.[2] We find many references to the status of Śūdras as the lowest in the social hiearchy. Śatapatha states that only the higher three varaṇas are eligible to perform sacrifices.[3] Brāhmaṇas also indicate the presence of various outcasts and dasyus.

This four tiered social system is generally understood as Chāturvarṇa in later texts. In Ṛgveda the 'Varṇa' is never applied to this fourfold order. The use of 'Varṇa' is only in reference to Ārya Varṇa and Dāsa Varṇa.[4] Yet the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa describes it as four Varṇas.[5] By the end of this era the Brāhmaṇa (priestly) class is definitely said to be superior to other classes. It is interesting to note that there are evidences, in the Brāhmaṇas, to prove that the castes were not rigidly hereditary. Even a member of low caste be elevated to the highest caste by dint of his special qualities and learning. From

1. (a) सन्ति हि देवष्वपि जाति विशेषः x x x 1 सायणभाष्यम्, A. B. 1-2- 3
   (b) ब्रह्मा वा अजः, क्षत्रं वा अश्वः x x x 1. A. B 6.4-4-12
   (c) ब्रह्मा वै पलाशः x x x SB 1.1.1.4
2. Jogiraj Basu, India of the age of Brāhmaṇa, Calcutta, 1969 p. 29
3. ब्राह्मणो वा राजन्यो वा वैश्यो वा ते हि यज्ञीयाः। SB 3.1.1.9,10
4. Prof. P. H. Prabhu thinks that "The Śūdras of the Rgvedic period seems to be no other than the non-Āryas, the Dāsas or Dasyus who different from the fair shinned Āryas and 'Śūdras' was probably the name of some prominent Dāsa tribe, which become synonymous with the whole community of slaves. p. 287, (Hindu Social Organisation"–Popular, Bombey, 1993).
5. Vedic Index, ii, p. 247

the story of Ailusi kavasa (Aittareya 2.8.1, kausitaki, 12.3) we learn that Kavasa, an illegitimate born of a maid-servant, was a victim of social ostracism. But by means of his enlightenment, he became an object of veneration even to the people of the highest class, and was addressed with the honorific appellation of Ṛṣi. Ṛgveda x.30 (Aponaptriya sūkta) is said to have dawned upon him.[1]

Mahidāsa, to whom is attributed the Aittareya Brāhmaṇa, appears to have been a Śūdra.

Early writers had been strongly advocating that the four-fold division was primarily based on birth. Their thought illustrates that by the time of Brāhmaṇa literature the upper castes i.e. the Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya and Vaisya had already been crystallised into groups more or less dependent on birth, while the Śūdras mainly the Dāsas and Dasyus, had already gone to a lower position.

In the Upaniṣdic literature, Chhāndogya mentions the first three Varṇas,[2] tells that birth in a particular Varṇa depends upon the nature of deeds in the former birth. Those who are of good conduct here, will attain good birth, and who are of bad conduct here, will be born as dogs or outcastes.[3]

Bṛhadāraṇyaka discribes the origin of the Varṇas as " in the beginning there was Brāhmaṇa only, but for the well being of the society God further created the other Varṇas.[4] Prof. Ranade observes that " In this unorthodox theory, we have the origin of the earthly caste-system on the pattern of a heavenly caste system almost in the manner in which ectypes in Plato's theory of ideas are merely replicas of the archetypes. "[5]

1. S.C. Bhāradwāj, "Society in Ancient India", D.K. Printworld, New Delhi, 1993
2. Chhānd. VIII, 14
3. ibid, V, 10, 7
4. Bṛh. up. i, 4, 11–15
5. "A Constructive Survey of Upanishdic Philosophy", p. 60

After a comprehensive study of this tradition P.V.Kane[1] renders the following propositions:

(1) that in the earliest times about which we have literary records there were only two varṇas, the āryas and their opponents the dasyus or dāsas; that the difference between the two was based on difference of colour and culture and was thus more or less racial and cultural;

(2) that centuries before the saṃhitās period closed the dasyus had been conquered and were given a position susbservient to the āryas;

(3) that the śūdras were the dasyus so subjugated and made subservient;

(4) that the spirit of exclusiveness and pride of superiority existing among the āryas with reference to dasyus soon extended to groups among the āryas themselves;

(5) that by the time of the Brāhmaṇa Literature, Brāhmaṇas (men supposed to be devoted to learning and priesthood), Kṣatriyas (kings, noblemen and some warriors) and vaiśyas (the artisans and common people) had become separated into groups more or less dependent on birth and that the brāhmaṇa had come to be regarded as superior to the kṣatriya by the fact of birth;

(6) that even such low castes as Cāndālas and paulkasas had evolved long before the end of the Vedic period;

(7) that owing to cultural advancement, division of labour arose and numerous arts and crafts had been developed and they were in the process of contributing to the complexity of the system by creating numerous sub-castes based upon occupations;

(8) that besides the four varṇas intermediate castes like the rathakara had evolved;

(9) that there were certain non-Āryan tribes which were

1. Kane, P.V., History of Dharmashastra, Vol .II, i, p. 48

supposed to have been originally ksatriyas but had fallen later on.

The end of the Vedic period is here taken as being not later than about 1000 BC. How much earlier it may be placed, is not possible to say.

7.1.2 The Epics, Purāṇas and Dharmaśāstras

7.1.2.1 Epics

Mahābhārata and *Rāmāyaṇa* give us a detailed theory of the origin and development of Varṇas. The theory of the origin of the Varṇas from the various parts of the Creator's body also finds a place in the Mahābhārata. In the Śānti Parva, the sage Bhṛgu says to another sage Bhāradwāja in detail.[1] Again in the same Parva, in an enquiry of king Janaka, Pārāśara sage also gives a list of fourteen sub classes, other than four-varṇas, like the Stena, Sūtas, Niṣādas and others.[2] Anuśāsana Parva provides a theory of the origin of several castes apart from the four varṇas,[3] which explains, that by permutations and combinations of marriages, several castes came into existence. This epic also gives an account of the division of duties for the varṇas.[4] According to this a person of lower varṇa may attain the status of a higher varṇa in the next birth by following his own dharma in this birth.[5] But during the course of the same discussion on varṇa, it has also opined that "all the Brāhmaṇas in this world could be readily called Brāhmaṇas only on the merit of their conduct or mode of living; and a Śūdra, if he is of good conduct, is considered to have attained Brāhmaṇahood."[6]

1. Mahā., Śānti. 188, 1–17
2. ibid, 297, 2–9
3. ibid, Anu, 48,3., 4–28
4. ibid, 141, 61–79
5. ibid, 143, 1–47
6. सर्वोऽयं ब्राह्मणो लोके वृत्तेन तु विधीयते।
   वृत्ते स्थितस्तु शूद्रोऽपि ब्राह्मणत्वं नियच्छति।। ibid, 143,51

Rāmāyaṇa's Bālakāṇḍa[1] gives a story of Visvāmitra, a kṣatriya, becoming a Brāhmaṇa by dint of his own efforts. This story suggests that the effort to attain the position of a Brāhmaṇa or change of varna was not countenanced with much favour by the society.

"Neither birth, nor the purifying rites, nor learning, nor the offsprings, can be considered as grounds for conferring upon one the dignity of a twice-born person. Indeed conduct is the only ground"[2]

The *Mahabhārata* also says "that by means of good deeds a Śūdra can become a Brāhamaṇa, and a vaiśa [a Kṣatriya]."[3] In the Mahābhārata, there are instances recorded of intermarriages also between the varṇas. King Śāntanu married Satyavatī, who was apparently the daughter of a Śūdra. King Dusmanta (or Dushyanta) married Śakuntala, supposed to be the daughter of ṛsi Kaṇva who was a Brāhmaṇa. And, King Yayāti married Devayāni, the daughter of a Brāhmaṇa priest Śukrāchārya. Ṛṣi Chyavana married princess Sukanyā. And two ṛṣis, apparently Brhāmaṇas, called Nārada King Sṛnjaya whom both of them sought to marry. Such instances of intermarriages are many in the Mahābhārata, and once more indicate that the varṇa-barriers were not regarded as insurmountable even in regard to such an important question as marriage.

7.1.2.2 Purāṇas

In the Purāṇic literature, we find the best recognition of the forces of social thought generated by the Buddhist philosophy, specially Vajrasūcī. We have seen that in the early Vedic period the varna system was flexible. But in later ages, the system tended to become rigid and the division came to rest on birth. The entire early literature shows that the varṇa

1. Rāmāyaṇa, Bālakāṇḍa, ivii, ff.
2. न योनिर्नापि संस्कारो न श्रुतं न च सन्ततिः।
   कारणानि हि द्विजत्वस्य वृत्तमेव हि कारणम् XII 143, 50 mbh. and 144
3. ibid, XIII, 144, 26

system, developed in the form of Jāti, was deeply rooted in the society. The significant expression against varṇa-system on the ground of birth, is found in the Purāṇic texts. In the Bhaviṣya Mahāpurāṇa, chapters 44 to 44 of the Brāhmaparva, we find many arguments against Jāti distinctions among human beings, since they are all sons of the same father. It shows that the Brāhmaṇas are not different from the other varṇas in their body and physical activities such as pleasure, prosperity, order, fear, engagement, age, renunciation, striving, skill, appearance etc. and medical treatment. There is a remarkable similarity with Vajrasūcī in the details of the arguments and the words used. A verse in this Purāṇa says that four sons of a father belong to the same caste; likewie men have the same Progenitor, same Father (*pitraikabhāvāt*). That they are closely one (*ekata jāteḥ*), can be understood by the analogy of jackfruits (*udumbara*) appearing at the top, middle or bottom of the tree being similar in colour, shape, touch and juice.

The Bhāgavata-Purāṇa also reminds that varna is to be known and designated by the deeds of a person rather than his birth. Persons who have grasped the essential meaning of the Vedas (Veda-drig) have decalred that the dharma of men which is by and large determined (vihitaḥ) on the basis of native temperaments or tendencies (svabhāva) in accordance with the times (yuga) is conducive to the welfare of men, in this worlds as well as hereafter. A person carrying out his karmas and following the occupation in accordance with his svabhāva will gradually attain the state of quality-les-ness (nirguṇatā) by exhausting or destroying the karmas born of his svabhāva. Just as a field that is being continually tilled loses all capacity of fertility and is unable to yield corn and even destryos the seed sown in it, so dies our mind which is the source of all desires, they become satiated by an over-indulgence in them;—fire may be extinguished by a

continuous pouring of clarified butter, though it flashes forth if the butter is poured in drops. If the distinctive characteristics or signs of conduct (lakṣaṇam) explained as indicative of the varṇa of a man be (absent in one person and) found in another, then call that person by the varṇa as denoted by these characteristics (lakṣana), and not by the one of his birth.

Instances of change of varna are recorded in the Bhāgavata and other Purāṇas. Gārgya, the son of a Kṣatriya attained Brāhmaṇahood.[1] Duritakṣaya, Pushkarāruṇi, Traiyyaruni and Kavi became Brāhmaṇas likewise.[2] So again, King Śaryati rose to the eminence of a great Brāhmaṇa (brahmiṣṭha) and officiated as a sacrificial priest.[3] And Nābhaga, another Kṣatriya Prince became Vaiśya owing to his deeds (karmana). Prishadhra, a Kṣatriya prince, became a Śūdra.[4] Not only individuals, but whole families and communities are said to have attained a change of varna in this manner. Thus in the same Purāṇa, a whole clan or group of people (gotram) known by the name Maudgalya is recorded to have attained Brāhmaṇahood, though it descended from one Mudgala who was a Kṣatriya.[5] Then, out of the hundred sons of King Rishabha-deva, eighty-one became Brāhmaṇas. And, a whole community of Brāhmaṇas is said to have descended from a Kṣatriya named Dhrishta, The Padma-Purāṇa tells us that Vyāsa and Vaibhandaka, though born of very low origin *(asat-kshetra-kula)*, were respected and honoured as dvijatis; and so was Vaśiṣtha who was the son of a vaiśya.[6]

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1. Bhāg. Pu. ix, xxi, 19
2. ibid, 20
3. ix, iii
4. ix, ii
5. ibid ix, xxi, 33
6. असत्क्षेत्रकुले पूज्यौ व्यासवैभाण्डकौ तथा। ....
वैश्यपुत्रो वशिष्ठश्च अन्ये सिद्धा द्विजातयः।। Padma Pu. xivi, 47-48

There are several other instances recorded of the change of varṇa in the Matsya Purāṇa,[1] the Vāyu Purāṇa,[2] and the Harivaṃsa.[3]

Harivaṃsapurāṇa shows that two sons of "NĀBHAGĀ RIṢTHA" who were vaiśyas became the Brāhmaṇas.[4] Brahma Purāṇa says that "By following these good deeds a Śūdra becomes a Brāhmaṇa and Vaiśya attains Kṣatriyata.[5]

In the Mīmāṃsā Kumārila says that if the action be the cause of determining one's Varṇa then one and the same man would be a Brāhmaṇa when performing a good deed, and a Śūdra when doing bad one, and thus there would be no fixity of caste.[6]

7.1.2.3 The Age of Dharmaśāstric Literature

By the time of Dharmasūtra there was a rigid stratification and internal solidarity of the four varṇas. Each group was recognized as distinct, almost complete in itself vis-a-vis its social life. And undoubtedly by now there must have existed in each varṇa numerous sub-divisions. The duties and rules governing social life of the four varṇas are being taken into account by the Dharmaśāstras. The mixed castes and outcasts are mentioned but rules and regulations for them were not defined clearly.The word JĀTI is applied by the grammarian Patanjali to such ethnic groups as the Ābhiras, whom he declares to be of other jāti than Śūdra. Varṇa and Jāti thus appear to be interchangeable terms.[7]

1. M. Pu. 1-88
2. Va. Pu. xcix, 278
3. H. Pu. xxvii, 14891.
4. "नामागरिष्टस्य पुत्रौ द्वौ वैश्यौ ब्राह्मणतां गतौ। XI, 6581.
5. सद्कर्मभिरेति शुभैराचरितैस्तथा।
   शूद्रो ब्राह्मणतां गच्छेत् वैश्यः क्षत्रियतां व्रजेत ।।
6. Tantravarttika, tr. G. N. Jha, p. 10
7. "Patanjali (II. 4. 10 Mahābhāṣya) mentions carpenters and smiths as

The position of the Chāndala must have been very low. In the time of Patanjali, (2nd century BC) while explaining a rule of grammar of Pāṇini informs us that the Chāndālas were amongst the Śūdras.[1] A few centuries later Kautilya forbids the chāndālas to follow the customs of Śūdras. Three Dharma Sūtra writers have used the term APAPĀTRA for those people who are different from Śūdra and sometimes from the Chāndālas.[1]

Though the caste system seems to be actually the categories of occupations, yet there are clear indications that in social life further distinctions were based on specialization.

Commenting on the origin of castes and subcastes Ghurye says in his concluding remarks[2] :

"It seems reasonable to conclude that endogamy was being rigorously prescribed and was followed to a large extent, and that the writers were at great pains to explain the origin of so many different castes, which had sprung up either by miscegenation, local segregation, occupational specialization, or tribal incorporation, because the orthodox theory mentioned only four castes."

The meaning of the word 'varṇa' in Sanskrit is 'colour' and it has also been derived from root 'Vṛ' to choose, meaning accordingly 'choice of vocation'.The word 'Jāti' originates from the Sanskrit root 'Jan' to take birth. Therefore E. Senart is of the opinion that that varṇa and jāti are distinct and essentially independent, though the two institutions may have become fused together later on by law.[3]

As a matter of fact the caste system is not to be found in

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belonging to the Śūdra class. The lowest of them, the chāndālas were in the same degraded conditions as they are now". R. G. Bhandarkar, collected works Vol. II, p. 450 /

1. Vaśiṣtha p. 11, Gauttama pp. 224-30, Āpastamba pp. 122-
2. Ghurye p. 89
3. E. Senart : " Caste in India" [Trans. by Ross.],p.122-128

such a developed form in the Vedas, the duties assigned to the several castes are clearly defined in the Smrties and Purāṇas.Therefore the watertight compartments of the Jāti system according to Brāhmaṇic interpretation are of a more recent age.

According to Manusmṛti the four varṇas proceeded from the limbs of the Creator, and in order to protect the universe he assigned different duties and occupations to the different varṇas. In a Śloka[x-11], Manu has used the word 'Jāti' as distinct from Varṇa. His theory of the origin of mixed castes, is little different from the Mahābhārata, due to Varṇasaṃkara-mixture marriages. Manu declares that Brāhmaṇa is the lord of this whole creation, because he is produced from the purest part of the Supreme Being.[1] Pārāśara[2] mean while stated that an uneducated Brāhmaṇa is a Brāhmaṇa only for name sake only. But in a further verse he said that a bad character Brāhmaṇa is alway more respectable than a pious Śūdra. Āśvālayana[3] declares that Brāhmaṇa is the best one among all varṇas, and Śūdra is bound to serve the Brāhmaṇas. Kapila,[4] and Angirasa[5] also agree on this.

1. मनुस्मृति, 1.87, x-6-7
2. यथा काष्ठमयो हस्ती यथा चर्ममयो मृगः।ब्राह्मणास्त्वनधीयानास्त्रयस्ते नामधारकाः।।23 दुःशीलोऽपि द्विजः पूज्यो न शूद्रो विजितेन्द्रियः। कः परीत्यज्य दुष्टाङ्गां दुहेच्छीलवतीं खरीम्।।32 पराशरस्मृतिः, अष्टमोऽध्यायः, पृ० 657-658
स्मृति-सन्दर्भः, द्वि० भा० कलकत्ता, सन् 1952
3. सर्वेषां चैव वर्णानामुत्तमो ब्राह्मणो यतः। क्षेत्रस्य (क्षस्त्रतु) पालयेद्विप्रं विप्राज्ञाप्रतिपालकः।।1।। सेवां चैव तु विप्रस्य शूद्रः कुर्याद्यथोदितम्। सर्वेषां चापि वै मान्यो वेदविद् द्विज एव हि।।2।। लघ्वाश्वलायनस्मृतिः, द्वाविंशोऽध्यायः, पृ० 1751, Same तृ० भा०
4. सर्वक्रतुस्वरूपश्च सर्वतीर्थसदाश्रयः। सर्वव्रतानि कृच्छ्राणि तपांसि ब्राह्मणः स्मृतः।।876।। कपिलस्मृतिः, पृ० 2611 स्मृति-सन्दर्भः, पं० भा० कलकत्ता-1सन् 1955
5. ब्राह्मणा एव च क्षेत्रं ब्राह्मणा एव दैवतम्। ब्राह्मणानां प्रसादेन सूर्यो दिवि विराजते।।10।। न ब्राह्मणसमं क्षेत्रं न ब्राह्मणसमोऽनलः। विधिर्न ब्राह्मणादूर्ध्वं न दैवं ब्राह्मणात्परम्।।11।। same

We find that all Smṛti writers state that Brāhmaṇas are as pure as fire, the gods are invisible deities but Brāhmaṇas are visible deities, and not only Śūdra but all the three varṇas are exhorted to serve the Brāhmaṇas. The social duties of Brāhmaṇas were defined as ṣaṭkarma.[1] They also made strict rules and regulations for inter dining -Brāhmaṇas could not accept food offered or touched by a Śūdra.[2] While other Smṛtis are more or less similar in this regard, the Śukranīti had a different poit of view.

We also find that in Smṛti literature the solidarity of a caste as a unit of social organization is more deeply acknowledged. It is the duty of the king to see that the various castes observe their own rules and regulations, and to bring back the erring members into the fold of castes by appropriate steps.

Śukranīti in the ślokas (38-42) of the lst chapter says that the caste of a person should be determined by his occupation and merits; it further enumerates various qualities of each caste as,

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1. जपतां जुह्वतां चैव यच्छतां च सतामपि।क्षेत्रोऽग्नेस्तु सुसंभूतो ब्राह्मणोऽद्यविशिष्यते।।12।। न स्कन्दते न व्यथते न विनश्यति कर्हिचित्। वरिष्ठमग्निहोत्रेभ्यो ब्राह्मणस्य मुखे हुतम् ।।13।। देवतापितृभूतानां काचिद्भवति कस्यचित्। ब्राह्मणे देवताः सर्वाः स च सर्वस्य देवता।।14।। यो हि यां देवतामिच्छेदारा यितुमव्ययम्। सर्वोपायप्रयत्नेन तोषयेद् ब्राह्मणान् सदा।।15।।- **आङ्गिरसस्मृतिः**, द्वादशोऽध्यायः, पृ॰ 3084, **स्मृति-सन्दर्भः, पञ्चमो भागः**
2. मृतसूतकपुष्टाङ्गो द्विजः शूद्रान्नभोजने।अहमेवं न जानामि कां योनिं स गमिष्यति।।64 शूद्रान्नेनोदरस्थेन यछिकश्चिन्म्रियेत यतः। भवेत्च्छूकरो नूनं तस्य वा जायते कुलम्।।65।। गृध्रो द्वाद्वशजन्मानिं सप्तजन्मानि शूकरः। श्वा चैव सप्तजन्मानि इत्येवं मनुरब्रवीत्।अमृतं ब्राह्मणान्नेन दारिद्रं क्षत्रियस्य च।।66।। इह जन्मनि शूद्रत्वं मृतः श्वा चैव जायते। यस्य शूद्रा पचेन्नित्यं शूद्रा वा गृहमेधिनी।।68।। वर्जितः पितृदेवैस्तु रौरवं याति स द्विजः।।68।। **व्यासस्मृतिः**, चतुर्थोऽध्याय पृ॰ 1653-54 same तृतीयो भागः सद्यः पातित्यमाप्नोति तदन्नं तत्परित्यजेत्। वेदवित्।। **मार्कण्डेयस्मृतिः**, पृ॰ 53, **स्मृति-सन्दर्भः षष्ठो भागः, १९५७**

"Not by birth are the Brāhmaṇa etc. separated, but by virtues and works. Are all descended from Brahma to be called Brāhmaṇa? Neither through colour nor through ancestors can the spirit, worthy of a Brāhmaṇa, be generated.

The Brāhmaṇa is called because of his virtues e.g. he is traditionally a worshipper of the Gods with knowledge, rituals and prayers, and he is peaceful, restrained and kind.

Those who are servants of twice born...... are called Śūdras.[1]

7.1.3 Buddhist Literature

The Buddhist literature shows that the varṇa-jāti system of Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra and Chāndāla was deeply rooted in society. The superioty amongst them if they acted piously in their life. A person's worth in society should be determined through his right conduct and knowledge. Traditional society was determined to oppose the participation of Śūdras and Chāndālas in religious performences specially mendicancy (Pravrajyā).

The Jātakas testify to the fact that even low-class people were allowed to resort to mendicancy (Pravrajyā). Kuddāla-Pandita (70) was a dealer in leaves. Mātanga, citta and

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1. "न जात्या ब्राह्मणश्चात्र क्षत्रियो वैश्य एव न।
न शूद्रो न वै म्लेच्छो भेदिता गुणकर्मभि:।। 1-38
ब्राह्मणास्तु समुत्पन्ना: सर्वे ते किं नु ब्राह्मणा:?
न वर्णतो न जनकाद् ब्राह्मतेज: प्रपद्यते ।। ।39।।
ज्ञानकर्मोपासनाभिर्देवताराधने रत:।
शान्तो दांतो दयालुश्च ब्राह्मणश्च गुणै: कृत:।।1-4011 द्विजसेवार्चनरता: शूद्रा: शान्ता जितेन्द्रिया:" -शूद्रसंज्ञका:।।
1-43- The Śukranitiḥ Prof. B.K. Sarkar, J.P. Publishing House, Delhi 2005

Sambhuta (498) were Chāndālas and Dukulaka (Śyama 540) was a Niṣada.

Lord Buddha did not criticize the varna system as a whole, though he declared that the varna distinction did not exist in the Buddhist monastic order.[1] Once Vashistha and Bhāradwāja approached the Buddha to settle their controversy about the varna differences, he concludes by saying that no one is Brāhmaṇa, because he is born of a Brāhmaṇa mother.[2] In Majjhimanikaya also Buddha refutes the claim of Brāhmaṇas to supreriority as the best varṇa. He brings out the similarity in the four varṇas by pointing out that all can progress morally. And Brāhmaṇa is that who has a good conduct and does good to all.[3]

We here present the translation of some verses of Dhammapada, which give the definition of a Brāhmaṇa This will show that the idea of Vajrasūcī had a Buddhist background : (text in reference).

7.1.3.1 Dhammapada

Brāhmaṇa

1. A Brāhmaṇa is sinless even after killing his mother, father, two Kshatriya kings and the whole nation including servants/followers: (Lust, vanity, eternal vision and short sightedness, the whole world together with the sense of attachment have been symbolised by the terms mother, father etc.)

2. A Brāhmaṇa is sinless even after killing mother, father, two Kshatriya kings and Vyaghrapancham. (symbols are just as the above. Vyaghrapanchm means that Vyaghra or tiger i,e. suspicion is the fifth drawback of a Brāhmaṇa. It is astonishing that a Brāhmaṇa is sinless even after killing.

1. Chulluvagga, IX. 14
2. Suttanipāta, XXXV, 3–37, 57–59
3. Assalayana Sutta, 11, 5–3

As a matter of fact it means that a Brāhmaṇa becomes sinless not by killing external persons but his own internal drawbacks and shortcomings.).

Forgiveness

3. There should be no assault on a Brāhmaṇa and the Brāhmaṇa should not be furious at the assailant. Fie upon the assailant of a Brāhmaṇa! The Brāhmaṇa who is angry with his assailant is more condemnable.

4. It is praiseworthy that a Brāhmaṇa controls his desires for lovely things. Sorrows disappear in proportion to man's emancipation from violence.

5. He, who has never done any misdeed with his body, speech and mind or is away from these three shortcomings, is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

Tolerant

6. I call that soldier a Brāhmaṇa who bears anger, restriction and even murder silently without any mental agony.

7. I call the man a Brāhmaṇa who is pious, virtuous, tolerant, free from anger and whose present body is the last.

8. I call the man a Brāhmaṇa who speaks so meaningfully, truly and without harshness that none is terrified.

9. I call the man a Brāhmaṇa who giving up sense of punishment for movable and immovable beings, neither kills anybody himself nor inspires others for it.

10. I call the man a Brāhmaṇa who is peaceable among hostile persons, forgiving among people to be punished and non-accepting among accumulators.

VIRTUOUS

11. No body is a Brāhmaṇa because of birth, clan or matted hair. Only he is a Brāhmaṇa in whom there is truth, virtue and sanctity.

12. You fool! What is the advantage of your matted

locks? What is the benefit of your wearing deer-skin? Your heart is full of drawbacks and you are washing the external body.

13. I call such a living being a Brāhmaṇa who is lean and thin and is in rags, on whose whole body there is a net of nerves and who is alone in meditation in a forest.

14. One, whose desires have not ended, cannot be purified by remaining naked, having matted hair, applying mud on the body, observing fast, sleeping on the ground, bathing in the dust and sitting with feet flat on the ground.

15. Inspite of not having civilized garments and ornaments, if any man acts virtuously, or is peaceful, polite, restrained, chaste and has given up desire for punishment to living beings as such, he alone is a Brāhmaṇa, an ascetic, a beggar or devotee of God.

Non-accepting

16. I call the man a Brāhmaṇa who in this world does not take anything big or small, light or heavy, good or bad which has not been ever given and who is non-accepting.

17. A man born of Brāhmaṇa parents is not called a Brāhmaṇa by me. If he accumulates, people will call him 'Bho'. But as a matter of fact who is poor but non-accepting, is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

18. I call that poor and non-accepting man a Brāhmaṇa who had no property either in the past or after wards or in the middle.

19. I call him a Brāhmaṇa who does not have an abode of longing, is free from suspicion after knowing the supreme spirit and has tasted nectar to his utmost satisfaction.

20. The man who has reached the ultimate destination after crossing the bewilderingly tough and wrong way of worldly concerns is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

Detatched

21. I call that detatched and disinterested man a Brāhmaṇa who does not have any expectation either in this or the next world.

22. I call that fearless and detached man a Brāhmaṇa who aspires for neither the next world nor this world nor for any worldly achievements.

23. I call that fearless and detached man a Brāhmaṇa who is free after cutting all knots of worldly life.

24. The wise man who has uprooted and thrown away the pole together with string, leather belt and iron chain is called by me a Brāhmaṇa.

25. I call that chaste man above sorrows and faults a Brāhmaṇa who has gone across sins and virtues together with a sense of attchment for them in this life itself.

26. The man who also gave up divine restraints after having given up worldly resptraints and is free from all restraints is called by me a Brāhmaṇa.

27. One who knows destruction of all his sorrows in this life itself, throws away the burden of his sorrows and becomes free from all restraints is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

Above Worldly Pleasures

28. The man whose worldly pleasures are over, who is clean and pure like the moon and is happy like resevoir of water is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

29. The man whose worldly lusts have ended and who has become an abodeless wandering ascetic after having given up all passions of this life, is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

30. The man whose worldly passions have ended and who has become an abodeless wandering ascetic is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

31. One who has no contact with both of the householders and non-householders, wanders abodeless and has the least requirement is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

32. One who is not smeared with pleasures like water on a lotus leaf or mustard on the point of a needle is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

33. One who is free from the sense of love, hatred, honour, jealousy etc. like mustard on the point of a needle, is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

34. Brāhmaṇa! Showing valour cut the flow of passions and drive away the desires. Brāhmaṇa! knowing the destruction of achieved adoration you will be ungrateful–You will have uncreated eternal bliss.

35. One who is solemn, learned, intelligent, aware of right and wrong things and has achieved eternal bliss is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

Contemplative

36. One who is contemplative, obliged, clean, adopts a squatting posture and has achieved eternal bliss is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

37. One who has become cool after giving up all his hopes and despairs, has no desire for accepting any distinguishing titles and has trampled all the worlds including heaven bravely is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

38. One who knows completely the movements and inertness of living beings, is dispassionate and has achieved release from rebirth in the world is called a Brāhmaṇa by me.

39. One whose movement (state after death) is not known to gods, heavenly minstrels and even men, I call such dispassionate man a Brāhmaṇa.

40. I call him a Brāhmaṇa who is the best, excellent, brave, unshaken, great (sage), learned and enlightened.

41. I call that sage a Brāhmaṇa who knows his previous birth, who has seen the conditions of both the heaven and hell, whose present life has been diminished, who has supernatural knowledge and whose all activities have been completed.[1]

1. Text of this translation in Appendix-3

7.1.3.2 Milindapanho { Milindapraśna}

The Milindapanha, like other Buddhist texts, declares, "A Brāhmaṇa is one who is endowed with high, good, healthy and divine ideas; who knows the state of affairs of his previous birth; who has dispelled all his doubts and illusions; who has vanquished greed; who has freed himself from the circle of birth and death and will not be reborn; who has become pure birth and death and will not be reborn; who has become pure after destroying evil notions and attachment once for all and who remains content within himself without depending upon others; who studies himself and teaches others; who accepts alms; who restrains his senses; who is wedded to his duty; and who maintains the high ideals of family. This model of a Brāhmaṇa leans heavily on the virtuous conduct of a person than his birth. The text repudiates the idea that a person's varṇa is determined by his birth and establishes that a person is a Brāhmaṇa neither by his birth nor by his knowledge but by his conduct.[1]

7.1.3.3 Avadāna Literature

As we find several references in early literature of Buddhism that social aim of the writers was the assertion of the importance of Kṣatriyas, the Brāhmaṇa coming next. We hereby give an example from Avadana which says that the Buddha will be reborn as a Brāhmaṇa.

In **Lalitavistāra** it is stated that Bodhisattavas are not born in lower families like those of Chāndālas, Rathakāra etc.. They take birth only in families of the two classes of Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas.[2]

But in other references we find that Buddha always preached that a person's worth in society is determind by his right conduct and knowledge not by birth. Sir Charles Eliot has rightly observed that "though he {Buddha}denied that

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1. Milindapanha [Milindaprasna], iv 5,26, pp. 220-231, Bombay, 1940
2. Lalitavistāra (Lefmann's ed.), p. 20

Brāhmaṇas were superior by birth to others he did not preach against caste."[1]

The Buddhists, like the Brāhmaṇic Hindus, believed deeply in re-birth; so innumerable and countless Buddhas are conceived to have appeared in the previous kalpas, according to Buddhist scriptures, specially in the Mahāyāna literature. Buddha is himself mentioned as having adored, through immeasurable kalpas in his previous births.

The Mahāvastu recounts declaring thus:- "these Supreme persons arise in one of the two kinds of families-either in a family of Kṣatriya or in one of Brāhmaṇa. When the Kṣatriyas are reputed as foremost in the world, the Buddhas, the supreme men, appear in the families of Kṣatriya, and when the Brāhmaṇas are reputed for their worth in the world they, the great seers, are born in the Brāhmaṇa families":- "द्विहिमेव ते कुले हि उत्षद्यन्ति नरोत्तमा:। क्षत्रियकुले च प्रथमं अथवापि ब्राह्मणकुले।। यदाहि अग्रा आख्याता लोकेस्मिं भोन्ति क्षत्रिया। तदा क्षत्रियकुले बुद्धा उत्पद्यन्ति नरोत्तमा:।। यदा तु गुणसंख्याना लोकेस्मिं भोत्ति ब्राह्मणा:।। तदा ब्राह्मणकुले बुद्धा उत्पद्यन्ति महर्षिण:।। 111.247-248

As to the excellent traits in the character of all Buddhas, the lord said that energy (vīrya) is the instrument of enlightenment and that they progressed because of their virtues of renunciation (prohaṇa), charity (dāna), self control (dama) and restraint (saṃyama). All Buddhas blended the virtues of liberality (dāna), morality (sīla) and wisdom (prajña).[2]

7.1.4 Gītā

The Bhagvadgītā says "the creature is said to have apportioned the duties and functions of the four Varṇas according to the inherent qualities and capacities of individuals."[3]

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1. Eliot, Sir Charles, Hinduism and Budhhism (3 vol.), 1921 I, xxii
2. A Study of the Mahāvastu-Avadāna by Radhagovinda Basak, Univ. of Culcutta, 1960, p. 42-43, 61-63
3. "चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया x x x ।।" IV-13, Gītā

Further it says[1] "Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras are distinguished by the qualities born of their own nature in accordance with the material modes."

"Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom religiousness–these are the natural qualities by which the Brāhmaṇas abides.

Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity and leadership are the natural qualities of work of the kṣatriyas.

Farming, cow protection and business are the natural work for the vaiśyas, and for the śūdras there is labor and service to others."

The above stated thought of the Gītā provides a rational sanction for the manifestly arbitrary divisions. It clearly shows that God divided the four Varṇas not because they were created from different parts of his body, but because he found them endowed with different qualities and capacities.The statements made in the Gītā concerning the varṇa basis is the most outstanding and specific. The theory of the Gītā classifics society into four varṇas in terms of the dominant Guṇas (viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) and the Karmas i.e. activities and occupations. The whole world of activities is a result of the complex intermingling of the three Gunas, characterised by puriry, passion and ignorance respctively. Commenting on this Dr. Prabhu says: "This is the general outline of the Gītā[2] theory of the individual's psychological make-up, — of his tendencies,dispositions, inclinations, interests and aspirations,— in terms of the guṇas innate in him. And, this theory is closely related to the problem of social relations,group characteristics, and social organization. The guṇas basically determine the tendencies and aptitudes, the

1. ब्राह्मण xxx स्वभावप्रभैर्गुणै:" XVIII - 41
2. Hindu Social Organisatin, pp.318-319

potentialities and the limitations, and directions of successful social contribution by the individual. They also determine the trends of his traits and character. And these factors are to be taken into account when the individual. They also determine the trends of his traits and character. And these factors are to be taken into account when the individual's relations with the society and for the purposes of social order and organization are to be considered. All the Karmas i.e., activities and occupations necessary for the social organization, upkeep and progress are classified in accordance with these psychological apparatuses in the individual called guṇas (guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ)".

7.1.5 Social divisions in other Societies

In Egypt during the Pyramid age there were three principal classes–the land-owners, the serfs and the slaves, the last two being distinguished from the first by the fact of their owning no land. During the Eighteenth Dynasty, to judge from the classification made in an official census, there seem to have been at least four classes. They were the soldiers who included among them all free persons of the middle class, not engaged in any of the other callings the priests, the craftsmen and the serfs.[1]

The social situation is thus summarized by Petrie: "When we look at the various classes of the country, it is evident that there was, very naturally, a large amount of hereditary succession to office and to business. We see the same in England or any other country, although every one is free to change his occupation as he prefers. In Egypt, on the contrary, no artisan was allowed to have another trade or employment, or be reckoned in any other class. Hence, once in a trade, it was impossible to move out of it, and the natural facility of a boy learning his father's trade tended to fix each generation

1. Breasted, J. H. Ancient Times, 1917, p. 67

into the same line. Thus the impression which the Greeks received when stepping into such a society was that its structure was a group of genea or hereditary tribes.[1]

Among the Sumerians the aristocracy of the city was formed by the priests and the officials, while the free landholding citizens formed the middle class, who worked their lands with the help of the slaves.[2] The fragments of Sumerian laws that have come down to us recognize no inequalities among these classes of the community.[3]

In the earliest period of the Iranian civilization, i.e. before 700 BC, three classes of society are often mentioned, priests, warriors, and husbandmen, but the fourth class, formed by artisans, is only once mentioned, though there is frequent reference to the work carried on by members of this class, viz. goldsmith, blacksmith, mason, etc. The origin of these classes is attributed to Zarathushtra. According to the Shah Namah, however, the four classes were made by Yima. In the Sassanian period, AD 226-651, we get more frequent references to these classes, and their relative position is also more well-defined.[4]

In China it is supposed that society has, from time immemorial, been divided into four orders, viz. gentlemen, agriculturists, artisans, and merchants.

According to Confucius, the people were divided into five classes, which in the descending order of social prestige were scholars, farmers, artisans, merchants, and servants, soldiers being always included in the last group.[5]

1. Petre, Sir. W. M. Flinders, "Social life in Ancient Egypt," 1923, pp. 11-12
2. Breasted, p. 119
3. Brooks, B. Allard, "A Contributions to the Study of the Moral Practices of Certain Social Groups in Ancient Mesopotamia," 1920, p. 88
4. Dhalla, M. N. "Zoroastrian Civilization, 1922, p. 7, 65
5. Bashford, J. W., "China, an inpretation, 1916, p. 43

Except the civil service, it appears that most of the other occupations were customarily hereditary. One of the Chinese books lays it down as a rule that "the sons of officers ought always to be officers, the sons of artisans ought always to be artisans. The sons of merchants ought always to be merchants, and the sons of farmers ought always to be farmers".[1]

In Japan during her milirary age--twelfth century to the middle of the nineteenth century AD—society was divided into five distinct groups. Hereditary soldiers, the Samurai, were the foremost of these. Farmers, artisans, and traders followed next in order. The fifth class was formed by two groups called the Eta and the Hinin, who were the Pariahs and outcastes of the community.

Till the latter part of the seventeenth century it had not been usual to send a Samurai to gaol for any crime. The Eta had to live on the outskirts of towns and villages and were governed by their own headmen. Prejudice against this unfortunate class of people was so great that it long survived the removal of their legal disabilities in 1871, serving as a theme for novelists.

The outcastes could not marry persons of the higher classes. During the feudal age inter-marriage among the various recognized classes of society required special permission.[2]

In Mexico, as a result of its conquest by the Europeans, the population is divided into three main well-marked groups with numerous sub-divisions. The highest class is formed of members who have more or less pure Spanish descent, the half-breed coming next, and the pure Indians forming the lowest class.[3]

In South Arabia there were two classes of Pariahs, One class, comprising the artisans, was regarded as the subordinate

1. Spencer, Herbert, "Principles of Sociology Vol. III, 1897, p. 422
2. Brinkley, Capt., F., Japan, p. 50, 76
3. Spencer, iii, p. 422

menials of the dominant class. Its members were required to live on the outskirts of the towns, and though admitted into the mosques, were not allowed to visit Arab houses. The other class of Pariahs was regarded as still inferior, and its members were not allowed to enter even the mosque, though they were devout Muslims.[1]

In ancient Rome the populace was for a long time divided into three groups—the patricians, the plebeians, and the slaves. Of these the first two classes comprised all the free men. It is a matter of common knowledge that the evolution of political institutions in Rome was largely the result of a conflict between the patricians, the politically privileged class, and the plebeians who were politically insignificant. Up to the time of Service Tullius the patricians alone ranked as citizens. Their marriage was regarded as sanctified and lawful. They had the special powers of testamentary disposition. None but they could consult the gods of Rome by a specially sacred procedure.[2]

In Anglo-Saxon England society was divided into three well-marked classes of people: the nobleman, the common freeman, and the slaves. There seems to have been also a fourth class called the "Laet". It represented a class "intermediate between freemen and slaves, which was rather infrequent in England though very common among the Teutonic peoples of the Continent". This class, which was a feature peculiar to Kentish society, seems to have had three sub-divisions differing in their wergelds, with wergelds of 80, 60, and 40 shillings respectively.[3]

To sum up, on commenting on elements of caste

1. Featherman, "Social History of the Races of Mankind , 1888
2. Muir Head,"Historical Introductions to the Private Law of Rome, 1916, p. 6
3. Chadwick, H. M., "Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions, 1905, p. 112

outside India G. S. Ghurys says "distinction by birth has been usually recognized by many primitive peoples and almost all the major civilizations of ancient times. The primitive people, in so far as their arts and crafts are neither many, nor highly specialized, have few classes whose status is fixed. But wherever status is recognized, privileges and restrictions in the matter of the choice of avocation are very common. Restriction on the choice of one's mate based on birth is comparatively infrequent among them. In tribal England, in Rome, and in Asiatic civilizations, occupations not only tended to become hereditary but were actually prescribed to be followed by specific classes and graded in certain order as high and low. Specialized occupations had come to form themselves into units of community life. Society was divided into two, three, four, or five well-marked status-groups, intermarriage between which was often prohibited. The Chinese civilization, before it was influenced by Indian ideas, seems to have been the freest in its social grouping.

Well-marked status-groups within a society, distinguished from one another by rights and disabilities, separated from one another by the absence of freedom of intermarriage, may, therefore, be considered to be a common characteristic of the mental backgroud and social picture of the Indo-European cultures. Specialization of occupations, accompanied by solidarity within specified occupations and great unfreedom about their choice, was a feature common to the ancient and mediaeval times. The circumstances that led to the abolition of distinctions, based on birth and occupation, in Rome and in England are peculiar to each and cannot be gone into here. Suffice it for us to remember that in each case it was the special conditions making for political unity and commercial aggrandisement, that slowly killed the ideas of status by birth and removed the unfreedom of occupation."[1]

1. Ghurye, p. 137-8

7.2 Medieval Period

The principal object of this chapter is to understand the social contents (specially on Varṇa - Jāti) of the numerous religious reform movements which exerted significant influence on our society during the medieval period.

Every religious reform movement was prompted by certain socio-economic conditions of the society. Its aim was not only to change spiritual or religious ideals but also to bring about a change in the socio-economic structure. Each movement arises from the needs of the society of that particular period; for the welfare and upliftment of the exploited degraded and oppressed classes of the society.

Religious reform movements have influenced society not only in socio-religious and spiritual matters but also as an opposition to the rigidity of the caste-system in Indian society. It has been a continuous tradition of protest against the caste-system, which has been a divisive force in society, separating the privileged and the unprivileged classes on the basis of birth. This is a very interesting common factor in the teachings of all religious reformers during the last two thousand five hundred years, right from Buddha to Gandhi, no one declared against or taught to eliminate this divisive force of the Varṇa or caste - system from its roots.

Although they condemmed the rigidity of this system and succeded in this regard to some extent.

This historical fact shows the strength of the caste-system and the instinctive conservativeness of Indian society with its centuries old social structure based upon occupation with the religious sanctions rooted in the inner life of Indian society. Hence no one socio - religious reformer was able to declare the total eradication of this divisive thought. There may be some rational explanation for this.

Background of Buddhism

When Buddhism emerged, Indian society was dominated by the philosophy of sixty -two heretical non-Vedic sects and Vedic Upaniṣads.

Early Buddhist literature indicates that society was not only classifided into four varṇas but there were also socially and economically backward communities like low castes, tribals, untouchables and slaves, who were below the status of Śūdra. Historians think that Buddhist India was experiencing a change from tribal to imperial polity and from pastoral to agricultural economy. As Dr. L. B. Kenny says "Buddhism thus seems to get its inspiration and support from the existing socio - economic and political changes overcoming India of the early days."

Prior to Buddhism the Brāhmaṇa texts show the supreme position of rites and rituals, which were challanged by the Upaniṣads. The era in which Buddhism rose society was simmerang with dissatisfection in all spheres of life.

Dr. B. N. Mukherjee[1] commenting on the social contents of Buddha said "The Buddha could not deny the existence of the caste system. It was perhaps too deep rooted in the Indian society to be got rid of altogether. He, however, tried to mitigate the evils of this system. He preached that "one does not become a Brāhmaṇa by birth. One does not become an outcast by birth. One becomes a Brāhmaṇa by act. One becomes an outcast by act." A scavenger, a dog eater and some members of the low castes were initiated by the Buddha and they became highly respected monks. Though he recognised the special position of the Brāhmaṇas, he did not accept their supreme position and even indicated that the Kshatriyas were higher in status than the Brāhmaṇas.

1. Buddhism and Buddhist society- p. 18 (Social Contents....)

Similarly, the gahapatis, who mostly belonged to the third caste, were sometimes called Kulaputtas or men of noble birth. This satisfied the ego of the powerful royal classes, and accorded social status to the rich gahapatis, who became great patrons of the new movement. The universal character of the Sangha was clear when women were also admitted to it and an order of nuns was formed. This as well as the fact that the Buddha did not despise even a courtesan, gave the women a status higher than what they enjoyed in the society known to the authors of the Brāhmaṇa texts."

The doctrines of the Buddha thus, to some extent, broke the social barriers and provided common people with a viable way of life in an age of frustration.

7.2.1 Tāntric Tradition

The traits of pastoral economy of Ṛgvedic tribes eventually declined, but the patriarchal social organisation and particular inheritance were retained by their decendents. With the growth of pastoralism among the Vedic people, when their cattle-rearing economy was supplemented by agriculture, many rituals of the non-vedic tradition, mainly from the female-dominated world (cult of the mother Goddess) found their way into Vedic texts. The central feature of the cosmology of the Tantra is the female power.[1]

These folk rituals were nourished in the agricultural people belonging to the lower strata of society.

It seem to me that this folk culture of the lower strata of society was not recognised nor could be approved by the orthodox rulers of Vedic and post-Vedic era. But Buddhism provided the scope to the so called lower communities when this process began to work in full motion from about the beginning of the first century. Therefore first the Tāntric

1. C. Chakravarti, The Tantras; Studies on their religion and literature, Calcutta, 1963 pp 32-34

elements profoundly influenced Buddhism[1], and later to Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and ultimately new religions known as Śāktism.

The mode of Tāntricism has changed from time to time as per the need of the social demands, but it is always free from all sorts of orthodoxy and prejudices in socio-religious affair of the society. The four fold caste system is not recognised by the Tantras. If any higher caste man is initiated into the Tāntric doctrines, he has to give up his caste prejudice.Under this philosophy the recognition of the Guru (teacher) as essential for any spiritual exercise and quest, and the Śūdras have every right to become the Guru. Tāntricism always maintained an uncompromising stand all the liberating potentialities of human beings without caring for their class, caste, colour or gender.

7.2.2 Sri Chaitanya's Vaisnava Movement

The Gaudiya Vaishṇava religious sect of Sri Chaitanya has made a significant contribution to the history of Indian religious movements, by simplifying religion and liberating it from the castic blow of orthodoxy.

Sri Chaitanya was born at Navadvipa (Bengal) on February 23, 1486. He appeared in an age of frustration, when religion had lost its real soul and was reduced to a mere form. Buddhism had no hold on people. Brāhmaṇical religious practices were under the evil influence of debased Tāntricism. And scholars used to find pleasures in highly scholastic system of New Logic (Navya Nyāya). Politically, Navadvipa was under the Muslim rulers, who were anti Hindu and exploiters of common people.

In the words of a historian" the people of Navadvipa were leading a life that was socially moribund, economically bleak, intellectually dry, and religiously tame."

In this era of crisis Sri Chaitanya preached the gospel of

1. " The Mantrayāna of Mahāyāna Buddhism became the introductory stage from which other offshots like Vajrayāna, Kālachakrayāna, Sahajayāna etc. arose in later times."

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love and dignity of man. He averred that the way of salvation is obtained only through true love for God-Krishna in the form of Samkirtana. He also denied any consideration of caste and family in God's worship. Even a Chāndala is to be honoured if he has devoted himself to Krishna-Bhakti. He addressed all men irrespective of caste or religion. He provided the vision of universal love and brotherhood to the society.[1]

Sri Chaitanya by preaching messages of his spriritual realisation became a religious teacher and a social reformer as well. Dr. K.K. Das Gupta comments on this side of Sri Chaitanya:- "As a matter of fact Sri-Chaitanya being primarily a religious leader, was not interested in social rules and regulations and in changing them. Breaking of caste barriers was not his aim. He tried to preach the message of his spiritual realisation. He felt that it was the nature of Bhakti to create its own fellowship by a higher law than that of caste. He wanted that caste restrictions should not interfere with his community of worship, and so long as they did not do that, Chaitanya agreed to leave them undisturbed.[2]

Chaitanya wanted that his movement should touch the lives of his countrymen at large, and lest his insistence on anti-casteism damage the interest of his movement, he accepted certain things and action apparently inconsistent with his ideas and ideals.

7.2.3 Sant Kabir

The contribution of Kabir (1398 A.D.), as a poet, a reformist, a saint, a critic and a humanist, to socio-religious thought and literature is unique. He appeared in an age which witnessed the conflict between Hindu and Muslim cultures. Kabir was concerned with human life. In levelling criticism

1. Krishnadas Kaviraja, Chaitanya Charitamrta, II p. 15
2. SCOIROM Shri Chaitanya and the Vaishnava movement, p. 70,

he spared neither the Hindu nor the Muslim fundamentalists. In his poetry, he spoke against the gross inequalities and social injustice prevalent in the masses. Therefore Kabir is regarded as the central personality in the socio-religious life of Medieval India.[1]

Kabir represents the medieval period's rich tradition of Bhakti movement of his Guru Ramananda. Ramananda had a large following who belongs to all castes and creeds. His famous disciples were drawn from the Śūdras and down trodden communities. Ravidas (a cobbler), Kabir (a weaver), Sena (a barber), Pipa (a Rajputa) and Dhanna (a Jat peasant). He preached that there is only one God and all the distinctions of castes and creed vanished from him. One man is higher or more respectable than another, not through his Jāti (birth) but only through his qualities. And without any reservation he taught the gospel of love and humanity.[2] Rev. G. H. Scott summarises the teachings of Kabir in following words "Vain are the distinctions of caste. All colours are but broken arcs of light, all varieties in human nature are but fragments of true humanity. The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brahmins but is freely granted to all who are characterised by sincerity of heart. He who reflects on Brahma is rightly called a Brahmin. The distinctions observed by Hindus are merely productive of that pride which God abhors. The rules regarding impurity deal merely with externals and cleanse not the thoughts of the heart."[3]

7.2.4 Sri Śankaradeva's Vaiṣṇava Movement of Assam

Śankaradeva (1449-1568) founded the Neo-Vaishnava Renaissance in Assam, which brought a deep and comprehensive outlook on social life and initiated a new

1. Kshitimohan Sen "The Medievel Mystics of North India", in the cultureal History of India edicted by H. Bhattacharya.
2. Bhattacharya, H., "The Cultural Heritage of India, IV p. 379
3. "Kabir and the Kabir - Panth, p. 34-35

Bhakti based literature in the local language. He set aside all caste barriers and preached a faith of Ekaśaraṇa doctrines and interdicted people from worshipping Śākta deities. Śankaradeva and his Brāhmaṇa disciple Madhavadeva, as revolutionary saints, purified Hinduism from within. Their contribution is tremendous in deepening the roots of the Indian culture in the soil of Assam (North-Eastern part of India). These regions experienced a great diversity in the terms of race (Austric, Mongoloi, Tai, Ahom, Āryan and Tibeto-Burman), language and culture.

The society of Assam, in the age of Śankaradeva, was such that animistic tribal cultures were intermingling with each other and taking shape of Brāhmaṇical social and religions order under the protection of the three Assamese states of eastern India namely, Asama, Kamarupa and Kooch Bihar. Sanskritised Śākta rituals and practices, hostility of the Brāhmaṇa prieshood, and the divisive caste-system were such factors which created confusion and unrest in the society. The Renaissance initiated by Śankaradeva and his movement has brought fulfilment in many ways, and has created a definite place for Assam in the cultural map of India.

Śankaradeva opened the portals of sacred knowledge to the common man by rendering religious texts into the language of common people and replaced ritualism by the KIRTANA form of worship of Srikrishna. His form of Vaishnavaism-Ekaśaraṇa Nāmadharma preached the universal brotherhood without restrictions of castes and creed.

7.2.5 Guru Nanak

The founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak (1469) is unique in the tradition of religious reformers of medieval India. Guru Nanak and his successors improved the idea of social justice. They declared that man's superiority was not because he belonged to some specific caste, but because he was a man,

an emanation of God. According to Nanak, a low-born, but God - abiding and truthful Chāndala living on the fruit of his honest labour, is a thousand times better then the hypocrite high - born who enjoys carrion and human blood. Guru Nanak preached the supermacy of God and the universal brotherhood of man. He saw the inequity of the caste system and the state of torpor in which it had enveloped the whole Indian society. According to him there was no question of reform; the caste system was to go, it was an incorrigible evil and must be abolished:

"Nonsense are castes, and nonsense the names attached to them.

All creatures are under one shelter, that of God.

Saints of Bhakti Movement in Medieval period

Bhaktas of medievel era, like Dhanna Jat (1415 AD), Jabhaji Rajput (16th century), Mira Bai (1498–1499 AD) Dadu (1550–1605 AD), Charanadas (1703–1780 AD), Ram Charan founder of Ramsnehi cult (1718–1798), preached the law of Karma, rebirth, Guruship, the spirit of tolerence and purity of life. They introduced the devotion through Bhakti in place of Brāhmaṇical rituals, ceremonies of Hinduism and rejected the authority of the caste system. Moreover, by preaching the path of Bhakti and purity of life to the depressed sections of the society they also strengthen the Hindu religion by providing the essence of Hindu spirituality in the language of common man.

7.2.6 Bhakti Movements of Maharashtra

The Bhakti Movements of Maharashtra in medievel times commenced in the thirteenth century when Jñāneśvara (born in the last quarter of 13th century) initiated Warkari Sampradaya (Bhāgawata Dharma). His famous Marathi commentory on the Gītā "Bhāvārtha Dīpikā" (Jñāneśvari) stresses devotion and love for God as the only means of self

realization. This Warkari or Pandharpur movement was joined by all castes and communities. Namadeva (a tailor), Sena (a barber), Narhari (a Goldsmith), Savata (a gardener), Gora (a potter), Joga (an oiltrader) and Chokha Mela (a Mahar) were his followers.

Tukaram, the most popular saint, belonged to the shopkeeper's caste, Samartha Ramadasa (who founded a new sect) and Ekanatha were Brāhmaṇa saints. In social contents all the saints in their own verses accepted the inequities of the caste-system and due to that the domination of the Brāhmaṇas in the spiritual sphere was broken. But this idea was confined to the religious and spiritual field only. Bhakti movements were never aimed to initiate any structural changes or social transformation. Dr. N. H. Kulkarni, while explaining the social implications of Religious movements in medieval Maharashtra says, " The religious reform movement in medieval Maharashtra was in the main an attempt on the part of the saints to purify, simplify and revitalise traditional Hindu religion. They were eminently successful in democratising the religious sphere, and this enabled women and the lower classes to rise to their full stature spiritually. This success was somewhat limited by the prevailing polytheism and the gradual penetration of Islam. In so far as religion played an important part in the life of the people, their achievement certainly created a beneficial impact on society. But the saint-poets were not social reformers in the sense in which we understand that term to-day. They preached universal, spiritual and ethical values within the broad framework of the traditional varṇāshrama-dharma."[1]

7.2.7 The Praṇāmi Religious Movement of Bundelkhand

Pran Nath [Mehraj] of Pranami movement was born at

1. " Religious Movements in Medieval ", p.180, SCOIRM

an emanation of God. According to Nanak, a low-born, but God - abiding and truthful Chāndala living on the fruit of his honest labour, is a thousand times better then the hypocrite high - born who enjoys carrion and human blood. Guru Nanak preached the supermacy of God and the universal brotherhood of man. He saw the inequity of the caste system and the state of torpor in which it had enveloped the whole Indian society. According to him there was no question of reform; the caste system was to go, it was an incorrigible evil and must be abolished:

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Jamnagar in Kathiawar on September 6, 1618 in a Kshatriya family. Dev Chandra, the founder of Pranami movement, adopted him as his chief disciple. Mehraj learned the Brāhmaṇical scriptures and new thoughts of his teacher. And after the death of his Guru Devchandra (September 5, 1656) he propagated his teachings, principles of Pranami sect, in other parts of the country.

Pran Nath was extensivaly touring in Rajputana in search of a militant Hindu patriot to whom he could provide moral support for the cause of Hindu India. But he could not succed. The rising fame of Chhatrasal as the Champion of Hindu religion attracted Pran Nath to Bundelkhand.

Pranami sect, founded by Dev Chandra and organised in a definite religious order by Pran Nath represents a liberal socio-religious movement with in the fold of Hinduism. As a social reformer he denounced the caste-rigidity of the Hindu society. He praised the purity, devotion and sincerity of heart in the following words:-

"Now tell me who is an untouchable, the Brāhmaṇa with a most callous heart or a Chāndāla with an enlightened soul."

Like Kabir and Nanak, Pran Nath preached the common brotherhood of man, and open denunciation of the discriminations based on caste and creed. Hence the disciples of him came from all sections of Hindu society, and even Muslims as well.

7.2.8 Vedantic and Bhakti Religious Movements of Deccan Penninsula

South India has played a very important and tremendous role in shaping the socio-cultural history of India. The period between the seventh to tenth centuries A.D. Deccan Peninsula witnessed a great revival in religious and philosophical matters of Hindu conscience. The three main wellknown schools of Vedanta, viz. Advaita (Śankara 7th century, Viśistādvaita

(Rāmānuja 1017 A.D) and Dvaita (Mādhva) eradicated the influence of the heretical doctriness of Buddhism and Jainism. The Bhakti movements of Śaivism and Vaishnavism of this period also rose against Vedic exclusiveness, Jaina asceticism, Buddhist moralism, and Āgamic Śaivism.

7.2.8.1 Śankara

Ācharya Śankara of the 7th century, is considered as the greatest Indian thinker whose contribution to Hindu metaphysics and epistomology is unique. But we are here concentrating on how his philosophy of Advaita Vedānta effected the social structure in that era only.

As a matter of fact varṇasrama was sacrosanct for Śankarāchārya. Even today the Smārta Brāhmaṇas of South India, who believe in total validity of the Smṛties, follow Śankara closely and traditionally in philosophical vision and socio-religious practices. But now the question arises that a philosopher who preaches the cosmic oneness how could he accept the divisive society based on Jāti or Varṇa? In traditional folk lore it is said that this kind of socio-philosophical question was also faced by Śankara, as Stotra (devotional poem) states.

Dr. N. Subrahmaniam in his article "Śankara and the Vedantist movement" provides a lucid and logical explannation to this enquiry in the following words:

"Śankara's metaphysics imagines two tiers–a higher and a lower divided by the spiritual fog called Māyā. The mist of ignorance will clear when the sun of knowledge rises. Then the ascent from the lower to the higher becomes easy, natural and even inevitable. Into this arrangement, as we saw above, the notion of competence enters. The knowledgeable one alone is competent to move from the lower plane of social bondage to the higher one of true freedom. The lower plane is in the context of society and not in that of the isolated Ātman seeking

and realising its present autonomy and ultimate identity with God. Thus so long as one is in the social milieu he is non-competent: or this statement can be inverted : i.e., so long as one is non-competent one is not released from the bonds of social conventions. These conventions, Śankara thought, were safely laid down by the Dharma Śāstras, the Grihya Sūtras and the Smritis in general. These texts consider the Varṇa system and the complex of domestic duties relevant and binding. So the Smritis, according to Śankara, are as authoritative in the (lower) social context as the Upanishads are in the (higher) metaphysical context. To the one into whose spiritual consciousness this realisation has not entered, the Smritis and the social plane are pertinent and only to those who have realised the truth are the Upanishads and the divine plane relevant. Thus it becomes clear that Śankara introduced a great revolutionary doctrine at the theoretical, metaphysical level but took care to keep at an orthodox and conservative level social arrangements, activities, values and attitudes. he held that so long as 'True ignorance', i.e., ignorance in regard to the ultimate truth persists, the observance of social norms established by the Smritis is necessary."[1]

Bhakti Movements

The rise of Śaiva (Nayanaras) and Vaishnava (Alvars) saints, of the seventh and eighth centuries, has a significant place in the history of Bhakti Movements in South India. Traditionally known twelve Alvars engaged themselves in regular missionary work to wipe out all heretical sects which tended to disintegrate the Hindu society. The Tamil Veda, collection of their teachings, constitutes the mystic literature of twelve Alvars. They simplified the process of attainment of the divine grace through inner purity without distinction

1. " Śankara and the Vedāntic Movement", pp. 35-36, social contents.

of caste or social states.[1] Thus the mokṣa the highest aim of life, as stated in Vedānta philosophy, was replaced by passionate devotion to God by the new religion of Alvars.

7.2.8.2 Rāmānuja

The movement led by the Alvars was the background of the philosophy of religion of Rāmānuja (1017 AD), who harmonised the Vaisnava Bhakti traditions of the Alavars with Vedic tradition (Vedāntic knowledge) in a much needed form as required by the society of those days. He visualised the path of devotion to God (Bhakti Mārga) as the direct valid means of knowing Brahman and by doing so he met the demand of Vedāntic metaphysics and supreme love as stated by Alavars.

Rāmānuja declared that devotion or love to God, knew no caste or social barriers, therefore salvation (mokṣa) could be attained by purity of head and heart by all. So many incidents are recorded by his biographers, which show his attitude towards caste. The names of Sri Kanchipurana and Dhanurdasa (both Śūdras) are the most prominent. In Rāmānuja's words "Relinquish all your pride of caste and take pains to acquire good qualities. If caste becomes the mother of conceit, then there could be no greater foe, but if it saves you from the evil, you cannot find a better friend."[2]

7.2.9 Vīraśaivism of Basaveshvara of Karnataka

Vīvarśaivism is a branch of Śaivism with a protestant nature. It is a major religion of Karnataka with followers in neighbouring states of Andhra, Tamilnadu and Maharashtra. This sect was founded by Ravanasiddha, the first of the five Āchāryas of the tradition. Basaveshwara (the middle of 12th century A.D.), by birth a Brāhmaṇa, brought out a great socio-

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1. K. G. Vardachari, "Alvars of South India, p. xix
2. "Life of Sri Rāmānuja, p. 205

religious revival in Karnataka through his movement of Virashaivism. Basaveshvara, as a revolutionary, revolted against rigidity in religion and social order and preached truth, love and equality. His religion has a minimum set of rituals, which applealed to the masses, mostly belonging to the lower sections of society. Vīraśaivism rejected the temple as an institution in totality. According to Basaveshvara, temple symbolises conservatism, selfishness, discrimination and the institutionalism of the rich and the bigoted.

Basaveshvara rebelled against caste-distinction and declared in a rather crude way that since no man is born through the ears, all were born equal and that a high-caste person is really one who thinks of doing good to the world.[1] On the gıadation of caste he maintains that bad conduct is low caste, while good conduct and character is high-caste.Through this kind of revolutionary seal of a new social order, he attracted people belonging to various strata to join his movement. And the Deccan penninsula witnessed a socio-religious revolution in the middle of twelfth century. His thought may be seen in his own words:

> What sort of a religion can it be
> Without compassion?
> Compassion must be
> Towards all living things;
> Compassion is the root
> Of all religious faiths;
> Lord Kudala Sanga does not care
> For what is not like this.[2]

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1. Dr. M. Chidananda Murthy, "Basaveshvara and Virashaivism in Karnataka," p. 236 (SCOIRM)
2. Thus spoke Basava, varse 96, Published by Basava Samita, Banglore, 1965

7.3 Modern Period

At the beginning of eighteenth century, India was socially degenerate, economically backward, politically enslaved, spiritually very low, and religiously confused.Certain undesirable socio-religious evils which were unfounded in the very early Hindu society. There had been a section of English educated class in India during the British period which urgently felt the necessity of reforming Hindu society and its institutions.[1] These enlightened persons had come to believe that Indian society was ridden with obscurantism, dogmatism, formation and caste-system and that it could not move with the time and contribute to the progressive nationalist thought unless the social evils, which had crept into its system done to ignorance and inertia were removed.

The nation's new spiritual, religious and social urge manifested through socio-religious reform movements like Brahmo Samaj of Bengal, Prarthana Samaj of Maharashtra, Ārya Samaj of Swami Dayanada, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda movement, Theosophy movement and Sri Narayana movement of Kerala.

7.3.1 Brahmo Samaj

Raja Rammohan Roy (1774–1833) founded the Brahmo Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj originated as a socio-religious movement of the nineteenth century. It represents a long tradition of attempts to find a real religion based on original Hindu theism to replace the prevalent polytheistic and idolatrous worship of those days. The successor of Roy's legacy Sri Devendranatha Thakur, Keshab Chandra Sen and others brought social issues, like women's education, widow marriage etc. in the fold of activities of the Samaj. The struggle against caste prejudices and social orthodoxy was started by the young Bengal group[2] and Brahmo Samaj had not yet

1. R. C. Gupta, "Hindu society and influence of the Great Epics", B. R. Publishing corp. Delhi, 1991 p. 382
2. S. C. Sarkar, "Derozio and young Bengal", in "Studies in the Bengal Renaissance." p. 29

renounced caste in practice. But from the sixties of the nineteenth century, Samaja consistently advocated a policy of social reform to modify the age-old caste system through inter caste dining and inter-caste marriages.

7.3.2 Prarthana Samaj

In Maharashtra, the socio-religious state was at its worst at the beginning of 19th century. The whole social life of Maharashtra was governed by traditional and orthodox customs and rituals. The social code of each caste and sub-caste was made inflexibly rigid. The humanist movements of the medieval saints had no impact on social life. At this time the ideas of BrahmaoSamaj gradually spread outside Bengal and Maharashtra was most suitable soil to spring up with such thoughts in the form of Prarthana Samaj. With the aims of theistic worship and social reform, the Prarthana Samaj was founded under the presidentship of Dr. Ātmaram Panduranga on March 31, 1867. Mahadev Govind Ranade and Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar joined this movement in 1868 and 1869 resprectively, and gave it a definite form.

At the front of social reforms, the leaders of Prarthana Samaj sought the abandonment of caste, the abolition of child marriage, the elevation of the depressed classes and the promotion of women's education. Vithal Ramji Shinde, a missionary of the Samaj founded the Depressed Classes Mission Society of India in 1906 to educate, provide employment opportunities, teach good citizenship and remedy the social disabilities of oppressed people.

7.3.3 Ramkrishna Mission

Sri Ramkrishna Paramahansa (1836) founded an order based an Advaita Philosophy, to whom Vivekananda gave a concrete shape. Ramakrishna had a vision of the divine mother and also tried with other forms of Sakta, Vaishnava and other paths of worship including Islam and saw the gradual

formation of a group of God seekers round him. Among them Narendranath Datta (Swami Vivekananda) was most dynamic, to whom the master entrusted the future of his new order. After returning from U.S.A. in 1897, Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramkrishna Matha and Ramkrishna Mission with the aims and ideas purely spiritual and humanitarian.

Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda tried to realise the age-old spriritual tradition of India in all its aspects. And Vivekananda preached this ideal to the world. In his speeches and writings he advised the so called upper classes to share their wealth and knowledge with common people. In a letter from London dated 1-11-1896 Vivekananda wrote : "Human society is in turn governed by the four castes–the priests, the soldiers, the traders, and the labourers. Each state has its glories, as well as its defects.

...Last will come the labourer (Śūdra) rule. . . . If it is possible to form a state in which the knowledge of priesthood, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial, and the ideal of the equality of the last can be kept intact, minus their evils, it will be an ideal state. But is it possible? In this letter Vivekananda called himself a Socialist, not because he thought it was a perfect system, but as he quoted—'half a loaf is better than no bread'.

Vivekananda was always conscious of the economic background of civilization. He did hear from his Guru, "An empty stomach is no good for religion." But he also knew that the highest aim of human life is, as his Guru used to say,—'Realisation of God'. Bearing fully this in mind he wrote in the same letter—

"A country where millions of people live on flowers of the Mahua plant, and a million or two of Sadhus and a hundred million or so of Brahmins suck the blood out of these people, without even the least effort for their amelioration—is that a country or hell? Is that a religion or devil's dance."

And again he reminded us—

"O India! Forget not that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti; forget not that the God thou worshippest is the great Ascetic of ascetics the all-renouncing Sankar, the Lord of Uma; forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense-pleasure, are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the Mother's altar;....forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers"—Modern India : Complete Works : Vol. IV, Centenary edn., pp. 479-480.

A scholar[1] comments about the views of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda on caste-system thus:- "Caste system, which seems to be a bane to the Hindus of India, was bittlerly denounced by Vivekananda. Yet, his Guru thought that this system would naturally wither away; we should not be in a hurry to drive it out. Judging from the trend of rapid changes in Modern India, it seems that the latter was more correct in his approach. The Order of Ramakrishna accepts people of all castes as its members and refrains from interfering with usual customs of the society.

7.3.4 Social issues and the Ārya Samāj

Swami Dayananda, founder of Ārya Samaj occupies a very unique place in the history of the ninteenth century. Socio-religious conditions of Hindus were worse. The social life of the followers of all sects of Hindu religion, was synonymous with ritualism. The Bhakti movements of medieval saints degenerated in the hands of their heirs. Varṇa system of Vedas was converted into rigid caste determined by birth. Due to English education and impression of western culture Hindus were losing faith, unable to explain the whys

1. Dr. P. R. Ghosh, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement, pp. 390-391 (SCOIRM)

and wherefores of their beliefs. In a planned way western scholars and their studies hindered rather than encouraged beliefs in our ancient Śāstras.

At this dark juncture of time Swami Dayananda rose up to save the Indian identity and the real form of Vedic Dharma. His movement-Ārya Samaj was devoted to preaching the essence of Indian traditions and ideals. His appearance was badly needed as *Maharsi Aurbindo* has stated :- "Among the great company of remarkable figures that will appear to the eye of posterity at the head of the Indian Renaissance, one stands out by himself with peculiar and solitary distinctness, one unique in his type as he is unique in his work. It is as if one were to walk for a long time amid a range of hills rising to a greater or lesser altitude, but all with sweeping contours, green-clad, flattering the eye even in their most bold and striking elevation. But amidst them all, one hill stands apart piled up in sheer strength, a mass of bare and puissant granite, with verdure on its summit, a solitary pine jutting out into the blue, a great cascade of pure, vigorous and fertilising water gushing out from its strength as a the very fountain of life and health to the valley. Such is the impression created on my mind by Dayananda".

The Ārya Samaj being a religious reform movement also, declared a crusade against child-marriage, compaign for widow-marriage, great contribution to social upliftment of the country by starting educational institutions, traditional and modern, specially for girls. And due to the Ārya-Samaj the caste system lost some of its rigidity. Even their followers, refused at one time to declare their caste for census purpose. For the purpose of religious rituals they trained non-brahmin even Harijan priests, which is the revolutionary step in crusading against the notion of caste. Swami Dayananda preached Varṇa and Āshram, two pillars of Hindu social order,

in their true Vedic form. There is no doubt the contributions of Ārya Samaj in wiping off the evils of Hindu's socio-religious life like religious superstitions, ignorance and secretiveness fostered by selfish people and social backwardness are enormous. Swami Dayananda's mission was the revival and propogation of the Vedic religion. It was against the orthodoxy of Hindus, also Christian Chauvinism and Muslim fanaticism that his Ārya Samaj boldy stood up.

7.3.5 Sree Narayan Guru of Kerala

The Āryanisation of Kerala reached its climax in the eighth and ninth centuries. The Brāhmaṇa scholars like Prabhākara (Mīmāṃsaka), Śankarāchārya (788–820 A.D. – Advaita Vedāntist) and Kulasekhara Alvara (exponent of the Bhakti cult) established varṇāshramadharma of the Vedic system. In Kerala along with socio-religious system the economic system was feudalistic, upper castes such as the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas and Nair were the land-owning class and the Ezhavas and other low caste Hindus were the tenants.

In these social conditions Sree Narayana Guru was born on 24th August, 1854 in a middle family of Ezhava community. A religious reformer and a scholar well versed in Sanskrit learnings and an ascetic bent of mind Sree Narayana Guru consecrated more than sixty temples, where Ezhavas and other low caste Hindus were priviledged to worship upper class Gods like Shiva, Vishnu etc. In his teachings he emphasised that man should find his salvation not by worshipping of images only but by the development and submission of his self. He gave the masses his message of *"one caste, one religion and one God for mankind."*

In the words of a historian "Like Sree Śankara, the essence of his religious outlook was Advaitism. But his Advaitism was not confined to the perceptual world alone. Unlike Sree Śankara's Advaitism, his was applied Vedanta,

as different from the purely intellectual and idealistic aspect of it. He was a Vedantin who, while living mentally withdrawn from worldly affairs, kept himself alive to the material and moral needs of the people. "He combined serenity of inner life with a rare capacity to turn out a large amount of useful work for the people with whom he came into contact"—His great precept "One Religion for Mankind" was a subtle denouncement of the futility of organised religions. "When the true direction of righteousness dawns, then the apparent divergencies in religions melt and mingle." Thus he emphasised the essential Unity of Religions and wanted that religion should be a matter of individual conscience. One of his great messages was :

"Whichever the religion It suffices
If it makes a better man."[1]

For the eradication caste-rigidity Sree Narayana Guru preached for interdining and intermarriage as he said in the Fraternal conference at Alwaye in 1921 *"Whatever be the differences in men's creeds, dress, language etc. because they belong to the same kind of creation, together, or having martial relations with one another."* This holy man and social reformer achieved much more for the mass than Śankaracharya or Kulasekhara Alvar of Kerala saints. Sree Narayana Guru was a rare personality and a source of inspiration not only for millions of masses but also for great men like Ravindranatha Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Swami Sraddhananda who visited him.

Thought of the 20th Century

To understand the modern concept of caste system we hereby present the views and ideas of some social scientists {Western} of the twentieth century, who have studied the

1. Prof. P. S. Velayudhan, "Sree Narayana Epoch of Religious Movement in Modern Kerala." p. 436

subject and given a number of theses about with the origin, development and characteristics of the caste system. Their major concern was reasearch based descriptions of the variety of castes and sub-castes and their socio-religious status in modern times.In tracing the origin of caste Risley thinks that race is the basis, while for Ibbeston and Nesfield it is the tribe and occupation, respectively.

In this era, two schools of thought of western scholars have arisen. Some of them most severely condemmed the caste system and others highly appreciated it. M.A. Sherring says ' it is the most baneful , hard-hearted and cruel social system that could possibly be invented for damning the human race.'[1] Maine described it as" the most disastrous and blighting of all human institutions".[2] Meredith Townsent[3] , Sydney[4] Abbe Dubois[5] and other western writers described it as ' a marvellous discovery, a form of socialism which through the ages protected the Hindu society from anarchy. It seems that both of these schools present an extreme picture of the caste system. There is one other thought according to which the caste system was an invention, an artificial product, due to the machinations of crafty Brāhmaṇas. [6] In the light of above thoughts we hereby present the views of the three great Indian thinkers of 20th century.

7.3.6 Maharshi Aurbindo

Maharshi Aurbindo while commenting on Gītā's concept of Swabhāwa and Swadharma puts forward his thoughts thus,

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1. ' Hindu tribes and castes, three volumes, 1872-1881, vol.lll. p. 293
2. ' Ancient Law ', 1930
3. ' Europe and Asia', 1901, p.72
4. Sydney Low, ' Vision of India ', llnd edition, 1907, pp. 262-263
5. A Missionary, who was in close contact with Indians for 15 years, " Character, Manners, and Customs of the People of India ", London, 1817
6. P.V.Kane, ' Hist. of D.S., Vol.ll, Part-2, p. 22

"all men can eventually arrive by spiritual evolution to this strong discipline, this large perfection, this highest spititual state. And each man can fulfil different functions according to his own circumstances, capacities, character, powers etc." He further says :-

"This Swadharma is of four general kinds, formulated outwardly in the action of the four orders of the old Indian social culture, chāturvarṇya. That system corresponds, says the Gītā, to a divine law, it "was created by me according to the divisions of the gunas and works,"-created from the beginning by the Master of existence. In other words, there are four distinct orders of the active nature, or four fundamental types of the soul in nature, swabhava, and the work and proper function of each human being corresponds to his type of nature. This is now finally explained in more precise detail. The works of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras, says the Gītā, are divided according to the qualities (gunas) born of their own inner nature, spiritual temperament, essential character, (Swabhava). Calm, self-control, purity, long-suffering, candour, knowledge, acceptance of spiritual truth are the work of the Brahmin, born of his swabhava. Heroism, high spirit, resolution, ability, not fleeing from the battle, giving, lordship (ishwara-bhava, the temperament of the ruler and leader) are the natural work of the Kṣatriya. Agriculture, cattle-keeping, trade inclusive of the labour of the craftsman and the artisan are the natural functions of the Śūdra. A man, it goes on to say, who devotes himself to his own natural work in life acquires spiritual perfection, not indeed by the mere act itself, but if he does it with right knowledge and the right motive, if he can make it a worship of the Spirit of this creation and dedicate it sincerely to the Master of the universe from whom comes all impulse to action. All labour, all action and function, whatever it be, can be consecrated by this dedication of works, can convert the life

into a self-offering to the Godhead within and without us and is itself converted into a means of spiritual perfection. But a work not naturally one's own, even though it may be well performed, may look better from the outside when judged by an external and mechanical standard or may lead to more success in life, is still inferior as a means of subjective growth precisely because it has an external motive and a mechanical impulsion.

What precisely is the intention of the Gītā? Let us take it first in its outward meaning and consider the tinge given to the principle it anounces by the ideas of the race and the time-the hue of the cultural environment. These verses and the earlier pronouncements of the Gītā on the same subject have been seized upon in current controversies on the caste question and interpreted by some as a sanction of the present system, used by others as a denial of the herditary basis of caste. In point of fact the verses in the Gītā have no bearing on the existing caste system, because that is a very different thing from the ancient social ideal of chaturvarna, the four clear-cut orders of the Āryan community, and in no way corresponds with the description of the Gītā.

The Gītā's words refer to the ancient system of chaturvarna, as it existed or was supossed to have existed in its ideal purity,-there is some controversy whether it was ever anything more than an ideal or general norm more or less loosely followed in practice,-and it should be considered in that context alone. Here too there is considerable difficulty as to its exact outward significance.

The ancient system of the four orders had a triple aspect ; it took a social and economic, a cultural and a spiritual form.On the economic side it recognised four functions of the social man in the community, the religious and intellectual, the political, the economic and the servile functions.

This system was not peculiar to India, but was with certain differences the dominating feature of a stage of social

evolution in other ancient or mediaeval societies. The four functions are still inherent in the life of all normal communities, but the clear divisions no longer exist anywhere. The old system} everywhere broke down and gave place to a more fluid order or, as in India, to a confused and complex social rigidity and economic immobility degenerating towards a chaos of castes.

Finally, wherever this system existed, it was given more or less a religious sanction (more in the East, very little in Europe) and in India a profounder spiritual use and significance. This spiritual significance is the kernel of the teachings of the Gītā.The Gītā found this system in existence and its ideal in possession of the Indian mind and it recognised and accepted both the ideal and system and its religious sanction. "The fourfold order was created by me," says Krishna "according to the divisions of quality and active function." On the mere strength of this phrase it cannot altogether be concluded that the Gītā regarded this system as an eternal and universal social order.

This was an inevitable evolution, because the external signs are the only ones which are easily and conveniently determinable and birth was the most handy and manageable criteria in an increasingly mechanised, complex and conventional social order.

The work or function of a man is determined by his qualities, karma is determined by guna; it is the work born of his Swabhava, swabhavajam karma, and is regulated by his Swabhava, swabhava-niyatam karma. This emphasis on an inner quality and spirit which finds expression in work, function and action is the essense of the Gītā's idea of karma.[1]

1. Sri Aurobindo Ghose, "Essays on The Gita "Second Series, Arya Publishing House College St. Market, Calcutta, 1928pp. 390-395.

7.3.7 Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) was an enlightened sage of the glorious Indian tradition; hence his views on the caste system and contribution towards the abolition of untouchability are of immense value. Despite his quaint belief in Varṇāsharama Dharma, he still insisted on the eradication of untouchability. We find that in the beginning from 1920[1]

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1. (a) 1920: "One of my correspondents suggests that we should abolish the caste [system] but adopt the class system of Europe — meaning thereby, I suppose, that the idea of heredity in caste should be rejected. I am inclined to think that the law of heredity is an eternal law and any attempt to alter that law must lead us, as it has before led [ohters], to utter confusion.... (C, XIX, 83f)

   (b) 1920: "The beauty of the caste system is that it does not base itself upon distinctions of wealth-possessions. Money, as history has proved, is the family. Both are governed by blood and heredity. Western scientists are busy trying to prove that heredity is an illusion and that milieu is everything. x x x It is diffuclt to imagine a better harmonious human adjustment. "Caste does not connote superiority or inferiority. It simply recognizes different outlooks and corresponding modes of life. (C, XIX, 174ff)

   (c) "To destroy the caste system and adopt the Western European social system means that Hindus must give up the principle of hereditary occupation which is the soul of the caste system. [The] hereditary principle is an eternal principle. To change it is to create disorder..... The caste system is a natural order of society.... I am opposed to all those who are out to destroy the caste system." (A, IX, 175f)

   (d) 1926: "In accepting the fourfold division I am simply accepting the laws of Nature, taking for granted what is inherent in human nature and the law of heredity.... It is not possible in one birth entirely to undo the results of our past doings." (C, XXIX, 410f)

   (e) 1925: He must follow the occupation of the varna to which he belongs, which means he must follow the hereditary profession of his forefathers. "The object of the varna system is to prevent competition and class struggle and class war. I believe in the varna system because it fixes the duties and occupations of persons.... Varṇa means the determination of a man's occupation before he is born.... In the varna system no man has any liberty to choose his occupation." (A, IX, 277) 1927: ""In [my] conception of the law of varna no one

to 1931[1] Gandhi was pro varṇa system because he felt that :-

1. The caste system is a better harmonious human adjustment
2. The hereditary principle is an eternal one and
3. This is a natural order of society.

In 1931, his thought got new words.

1932: "My own opinion is that the Varṇa system has just now broken down. There is no true Brahmin or true Kshatriya or Vaishya. We are all Shudras, i.e. one varna. This position is accepted, then the thing becomes easy. If this does not satisfy our vanity, then we are all Brahmins. Removal of untouchability does mean root-and-branch destruction of the idea of superiority and inferiority." (C,LI, 199f).

Mark Lindley rightly pointed out that Gandhiji was not preaching intermarriage or interdining till 1932 but ten years later he was convinced that interdining and intermarriage were important means in abolishing untouchability, he said in 1942 : "When I said that removal of untouchability did not include the removal of restrictions on interdining and intermarriage, I had the general Hindu public in mind, not the Congress workers or Congressmen. These have to abolish untouchability from every part of their life." (C, LXXV, 207).

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is superior to any other ... A scavenger has the same status as a Brahmin." (C, XXXV, 260)

1. 1931: "I do not believe in caste in the modern sense. It is an excrescence and a handicap on progress. Nor do I believe in inequalities between human beings. We are all absolutely equal. But equality is of souls and not bodies.... We have to realize equality in the midst of this apparent inequality. Assumption of superiority by any person over any other is a sin against God and man. Thus caste, in so far as it connotes distinctions in status, is an evil.

"I do however believe in varna which is based on hereditary occupations. Varṇas are four to mark four universal occupation — imparting knowledge, defending the defenceless, carrying on agriculture and commernce, and performing service [to other humans] through physical labour. According to my definition of varna there is no varna in operation at present in Hinduism.

But as we find that Gandhi was strictly following interdining and promoting intermarriage in his Ashram and colleagues as he said to Patel in 1937 " For ordinary people, removal of untouchability is enough. But, for you, mere touch is not enough. You must continue to proceed further....

"The Hindu masses still follow quite a few restrictive practices in the matter of interdining and intermarriage. [And] even I have followed certain restrictions in this [latter] regard. That is why I have not spoken to the masses about these.

But if I suggest to you that you should go to the extent of interdining and intermarrying with Harijans I would not be violating truth..... You have really not much control in the matter of intermarriage. You should certainly not bring compulsion on your children in this matter. Interdining is a different matter. If your mother says that it is irreligious, you must tell her that you would take the food cooked by her as well as by an untouchable, and it would not matter that you were forsaken by her on that account." (C, LXV, 134f). And as he congratulated a follower Sh. Radhamadhava Mitra and Gora in 1940, in 1946 he vowed, to attend only the weddings between Harijan and members of other Varna.

To understand Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to the movement against untouchability in a historical prespective we must take into account the freedom movement's concern about untouchability. Indian National Congress from 1885 to 1917 deliberately avoided the social issues. Leaders were thinking that as a political party Congress must represent our political aspirations only. But by 1917 the same Congress passed a resolution as follows:-

The necessity, justice and righteousness of removing all the disabilities imposed by religion and social customs upon the Depressed Classes. Those disabilities being of a most vexatious and oppressive character, subjecting those classes to considerable hardship and inconvenience by prohibiting

them from admission into public schools, hospitals, courts of justice and public offices, and the use of public wells, etc. These disabilities, social in origin, amount in law and practice to political disabilities and as such fall legitimately within the political mission and proparganda of the Indian National Congress.

In 1918, B. G. Tilak said, in an Untouchables Conference sponsored by Gaekwad of Baroda, *"It is a sin against God to say that a person is untouchable, who is not so to God himself --- Hinduism absorbed the Śūdras, can it not also absorb the untouchables."*

Shortly before Gandhi's taking leadership of the Congress, the removal of disabilities of untouchables and depressed classes became a matter of greater importancce and urgency for all national leaders of the freedom movement.

Indian National Congress adopted historic resolution of non-cooperation, which was drafted by Gandhiji in 1920. It's concluding paragraph was on the abolition of untouchability. Eleanor Zelliot says " The untouchable's problem was now a reproach to Hinduism rather than a hardship to untouchables".[1]

In support of this resolution,[2] Gandhi also got the support of Shankaracharya of Sharda Matha. In his statement Ācharya said that the uplift of the untouchables was in accordance with the 'Śāstras.'

Gandhi introduced new clauses in Congress pledges[2] to underline anti-untouchability. Gandhi also insisted that sanitation work in Congress Sessions will be done by volunteers including Brahmins. And in his Ashram the same rule was followed. In the resolutions on National Educational Institutions, a stricture was included on the education of

1. Congress and the Untouchables, 1917-1950 in Rechard Sisson and Stanley Wolpert (Eds.) Congress and Indian Nationalism: The Pre-Indepependence Phase, 1988, Oxford.
2. Baren Ray, "Gandhi Against Untouchability, p. 25

untouchables. A series of special educational Ashrams (residential schools) were established by Gandhians in remote areas of the country.

After the Poona pact was signed under the presidentship of Pt. Malaviya an All India Anti-untouchability League was founded. On 9th December, 1932 through a press message Gandhi told the nation to change its name as servants of the untouchables society (Harijan Sewak Sangh). Gandhi said: "Every Harijan Sevak must be fired with a passion to purify Hinduism and must be ready to lay down his life in the attempt. Such a sevak will be ready to sacrifice his all in order to wipe out the blot on Hinduism. The work should be as one of his life's functions. If the worker is fired with this passion, the path will be clear to him. Thus a worker would rather starve than allow the Harijans to be starved, would hesitate to use amenities which are denied to the Harijans and feel increasing identification with them every day. All this work should be done without regard to political results and only in order to keep Hinduism pure and alive." 7 November 1933, Gandhi commenced his nationwide tour to promote the Harijan cause. In a period of nine months he travelled 12,500 miles travelling even some of the remotest areas of the nation. He addressed hundreds of public meetings exhorting the Hindus to take to Harijan uplift work. He appealed for all public temples to be opened to the untouchables. And Satyagraha movements were started for this by Gandhi and his followers at Guruvayaurpur, Travncore etc.

Mark Lindley[1] observed that Gandhi as a seeker after truth, his ideas about Varṇa and intermarriage changed gradually over the years. Eleanor Zelliot[2] also expressed her view in that same manner "In 1920 he voiced moderate

1. "How Gandhi came to Believe Caste must be Dimantled by Intermarriage", p.1, 17
2. "From untouchable to Dalit", p. 153

opposition to social intercourse between castes ...... Twenty six years later, he said " If I had my way I would persuade all caste Hindu girls coming under my influence to select Harijan husbands " . Underlying Gandhi's change in attitude towards social practices was an unchanging belief in varnashrama dharma.

Mahatma Gandhi should be credited for his whole hearted concern for the untouchables and a continuation of the Gandhian tradition may be found in several valuntary agencies working for integrated development of depressed classes.

As we find that the idea of untouchability is an enigma to Indian social history and it is a perverted outcome of the caste or Varṇa system. Ofcourse the four Varṇa system was just a division of labour. But in the course of time this resulted in watertight compartments, and degenerated into the present caste system. Social disabilities of fourth Varṇa Śūdra's and outcaste were specific and numerous. This section of Indian society were deprived the basic facilities and were treated by the caste Hindus as subhuman.

When Gandhi became the central figure of Indian socio-political movement there was a rich tradition of socio-religous reformers like Ramanuja (10th century) Sant Jnaneswara, Ekanatha, Tukaram, Ravidas, Kabir, (12th 13th century), Swami Vivekananda, etc., who had succeeded to a great extent in eastablishing equality in matters of their Bhakti cult and spiritual world.

In ninteenth century, the British rulers brought with them western thoughts on casteless society and individual liberty. As a result some outstanding Indians like Raja Rammohan Roy and others initiated movements like Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj etc., which aimed at liberalizing Hindu religion and preaching of the brotherhood of man. Swami Dayananda preached that the Vedic Chāturvarṇa system should be substituted for the manifold ramification of current

caste. Mahatma Jyotirao Phooley (1873) of Poona established Satyashodhaka Samaj with the purpose of asserting the worth of man irrespective of caste. The militant movement against caste started by Phooley in 1848 perceived the neccessity of educating Dalit castes. Phooley's revolt against caste, preaching ordinary human rights to all sections of Hindu society got the support from Justice Ranade. This movement for social justice got real strength when the Maharaja of Kolhapur joined by demanding communal representation at least for ten years.

In the light of the above mentioned tradition of socio-spiritual reformers, who revolted against the caste-system and who preached equality among all human beings how could a great Indian soul like Gandhi {who was pro Varna or caste} say in 1932 " If eradication of castes means the abolition of Varṇa I do not approve of it. But I am with you if your aim is to end the innumerable caste distinctions " (C.L1, 264)And his commitment for the end of this agony of caste distinctions, is seen in speech which he delivered after his talk with Sri Narayana Guru in 1925"

His Holiness [Sri Narayana Guru] told me yesterday that we might not see the end of this agony during our life time, in this generation, and that I should have to wait for another incarnation of mine before I had the pleasure of seeing the end of this agony. I respectfully differed from him. I hope to see the end in this very age during my life time, but I do not hope to do so without your assistance.[Collected Works, Vol.26, pp. 293-299]

But Ambedkar continuously criticised Gandhi on this issue. According to him this social evil has social, economic, political and religious roots, which are not understood by Gandhi. In his words :–

"The Mahatma seems to me to suggest... that Hindu society can be made tolerable and even happy without any fundamental change in its structure if all the highcaste Hindus

can be persuaded to follow a high standard of morality in their dealing with the low-caste Hindus. I am totally opposed to this kind of ideology. I can respect those of the caste Hindus who try to realize a high social ideal in their life. Without such men India would be an uglier and a less happy place to live in than it is."

"Caste system was better than the class system on the ground that caste was the best possible adjustemnt of social stability. If that be the reason why the Mahatma clings to the theory of everyone following his or her ancestral calling, he is clinging to a false view of social life.... Stability is wanted, but not at the cost of change when change is imperative.... Adjustment is wanted, but not at the sacrifice of social justice. Can it be said that the adjustment of social relationship on the basis of caste, i.e. on the basis of each to his hereditary calling avoids those evils ? I am convinced that it does not. Far from being the best possible adjustment, I have no doubt that it is of the worst possible kind inasmuch as it offends against both the canons of social adjustment—namely fluidity and equity."

"Does he regard [his concept of hereditary] varna as the essence of Hinduism? One cannot as yet give any categorical answer. "

Dr. Ambedkar's Indictment' will answer 'No'. In that article he does not say that the dogma of varna is an essential part of the creed of Hinduism. Far from making varna the essence of Hinduism, he says 'The essence of Hinduism is contained in its enunciation of one and only God as truth and its bold acceptance of ahimsa as the law of the human family.' But readers of his [other] article... will say 'Yes'."

"The reason why the Mahatma is always supporting caste and varna is because he is afraid that if he opposes them he will lose his place in politics. Whatever may be the source of

this confusion, the Mahatma must be told that he is deceiving himself and also deceiving the people by preaching caste under the name of varna."[1]

The above discussion shows that Ambedkar and Gandhi represent two schools of thought, which were in the nation's air. Ambedkar considered caste, especially in its present form, so degrading and anti national, that it should be abolished altogether without any hesitation or delay. And Gandhi was advocating for abolition of bad outcomes of the caste system, untouchability etc. by intermarriage, interdining etc. He was also supporting those who believed that the best way to bring about the desired end was to hark back to the imagined pure state of Hindu society which was characterized by the existance of only the traditional four-fold Varṇa-system. But we find that Gandhi did not provide us with a complete programme for this. And Dayananda Swami's, Ārya Samaja's efforts in this direction were not very succesful.

I think that the justification for Gandhi's stand on {pro} Varṇa system, lies in the following line:—

Gandhi's first book was "Hind Swaraj" (1908). This has a severe condemnation of modern civilization. As he felt that if India will discard "modern civilization" of the west, the nation will only gain by doing so. Gandhi's philosophy sought to combine a village-oriented decentralized vision of development with reformed Hindu spirituality. But Ambedkar's verdict, that ' Villages are cesspools' and ' the Gandhi age is dark age', was not at all unrecosonable in its period.[2]

In the Appendix II of the same book, extracts from Mr. Alfred Webb's valuable collection were published, in which

1. As quoted by Mark Lindley, pp.4-7
2. Gail Omvedt "Dalits and the Democratic Revolution", p. 340 (Sage, N.D., 1994)

testimonies of eminent European scholars show how the ancient Indian civilization has little to learn from the moderns.[1]

1. Hind Swaraj,1938,

J. Seymour Keay, M. P. Banker in India and India Agent (Writing in 1883)

"It cannot be too well understood that our position in India has never been in any degree that of civilians bringing civilization to savage races. When we landed in India we found there a hoary civilization, which, during the progress of thousands of years, had fitted itself into the character and adjusted itself to the wants of highly intellectual races. The civilization was not perfunctory, but universal and all-pervading — furnishing the country not only with political systems, but with social and domestic institutions of the most ramified description. The beneficent nature of these institutions as a whole may be judged from their effects on the character of the Hindu race. Perhaps there are no other people in the world who show so much in their characters the advantageous effects of their own civilization. They are shrewd in business, acute in reasoning, thrifty, religious, sober, charitable, obedient to parents, reverential to old age, amiable, law-abiding, compassionate towards the helpless and patient under suffering."

Sir William Wedderburn, Bart

"The Indian village has thus for centuries remained a bulwark against political disorder, and the home of the simple domestic and social virtues. No wonder, therefore, that philosophers and historians have always dwelt lovingly on this ancient instiution which is the natural social unit and the best type of rural life: self-contained, industrious, peace-lovings, conservative in the best sense of the word. ... I think you will agree with me that there is much that is both picturesque and attractive in this glimpse of social and domestic life in an Indian village. It is a harmless and happy form of human existence. Moreover, it is not without good practical outcome."

Colonel Thomas Munro

(Thirty-two year's service in India)

"If a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to convenience or luxury; schools established in every village, for teaching reading, writing and artithmetic; the general practice of hospitality and charity among each other; and, above all, a treatment of the female sex, full of confidence, respect and delicacy, are among the signs which denote

We also find in his writings that he was preaching for Grama Swaraj, because every village in ancient time was enjoying local governance as an independent unit in socio-political and economical conditions. This had engendered a splendid sense of solidarity among the members of the village community. The stability, co-operative spirit, and sense of solidarity seen in the village communities evoked the following remarks from **Sir Charles Metcalfe**, who frequently pleaded against the introduction of the system of collecting revenue directly from individual proprietors. He observes: "The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last within themselves where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution; Hindoo, Pathan, Mogul, Maratha, Sikh, English, are all masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves: an hostile army passes through the country: the village communites collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked ... If a country remains for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return. The sons will take the places of their fathers; the same site for the village, the same position for the houses, the same lands will be occupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post

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a civilized people, then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe; and if civilization is to become an article of trade between the two countries, I am convinced that this country (England) will gain by the import cargo."

through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success...all acting in union with a common interest as regards the Government, and adjusting their own separate interests among themselves according to established usage."[1]

Gandhi's thought on his condemnation of the western system and advocacy for ancient system of village solidarity was the root of his pro caste stand. So he said in 1936; "Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know.... Varna [has] nothing to do with castes. The law of varna teaches us that we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling."

To understand the position of Mahatma Gandhi we may quote the two scholars of west regarding the strongly entrenched and integrated position of caste in Hindu life. One, Prof. Sir Frederic Bartlett[1], is a world famous psychologist - who described the caste as the *"Chief differentiating feature between western cultures and Hinduism and pronounces it to be one of the "hard points" of Hindu culture*[3]. And the other, Prof. J. H. Hutton, a social anthropologist, *is afraid that the destruction of the caste-system" even if it could be done might spell disaster to the society and cautions against any direct attack against it.*[4]

To the criticism of Gandhi by Ambedkar that "The real reason why the Mahatma is suffering from this confusion is probably to be traced to two sources.------ The reason why the Mahatma is always supporting caste and varna is because he is afraid that if he opposes them he will lose his place in

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1. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the officers of the East India Co., Vol. III, (Revenue), 1832, pp.331-2 (Appendix 84)
2. P. 153
3. Bartlett. "Anthropology in Reconstruction, p. 5
4. Hutton "Cast in India", 1946, p. 14

politics. Whatever may be the source of this confusion, the Mahatma must be told that he is deceiving himself and also deceiving the people by preaching caste under the name of varna."

Eleanor Zelliot rightly describes the position of Gandhi in these words, " They reflect his dual role as Mahatama and politician in Indian life, already apparent at that time. As a politician, Gandhi said: "Swaraj is as unattainable without the removal of the sin of untouchability as it is without Hindu-Muslim unity" (Young India, 29 December 1920). As Mahatma Gandhi said: "I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable..." (Young India, 27 April 1921). As both Mahatma and politician, Gandhi sought to weave the divergent interests in India into a unified opposition to the British, at the same time trying to pursue a course of reform without rending the social fabric of Indian society. In Delton's words, "Indian society saw Gandhi, and Gandhi regarded himself, as occupying the peculiar position of a figure above the discord around him, and uniquely capable of harmonizing it."

Although Gandhi was not the first to cry out against untouchability, he was the most prominent caste Hindu to proclaim that it was harmful to Hinduism, to make its removal a personal responsibility of the caste Hindu, to keep it before the public eye with passionate oratory and vivid imagery, and to found an organization for service to Untouchables. Perhaps as important as his ideology and his pronouncement was his personal example, from the beginning, of touching the Untouchable."[1]

Gandhi not only like other reformers of twentieth century, said that untouchability had no part in this divine ordering and inhuman, but also described it as sinister, a curse,

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1. p.155

a great blot on Hindu society, a device of Shaitan and an excresence on Hinduism.

According to a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi Acharya Kaka Kalelkar[1] Gandhi infused new life into the nation for the Swaraj, but put three mandatory conditions for this; -

1. Hindu -Muslim unity
2. Eradication of untouchability and uplift of Tribals and
3. A Khadi campaign so that the peasants could get cottage industry to end their partial unemployment and become self reliant.

We may conclude that Mahatma Gandhi did not attack the caste-system as a whole or as Ambedkar was expecting from him. But from the beginning of his socio-political life he worked for this within the framework of the system. Because he was very much convinced that Swaraj is not attainable without the removal of untouchability. As Zelliot and Delton said, "Considering his temperament, nature and mission of life, we should not expect Gandhi to mount any aggressive attack or to abolish the caste-system in toto, instead he worked genuinly for liberalising it in a harmonious way."

Shri Dharampai in his book 'Understanding Gandhi '[2] gives an evidence which provides a clear picture of Gandhi's mind on this subject. In his own words: "In 1932-1933 Gandhiji was in Yervada prison along with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Mahadev Desai. The three had long discussions on numerous matters. These were mostly written down by Mahadev Desai in the diary he kept since he had joined Gandhiji around 1918. These 1932-1933 diaries were published in three volumes (in Hindi) in 1948 itself. In volume

1. Kaka Kalelkar, Quintessence of Gandhian Thought, Delhi, 2006 p.8
2. pp. 88-89 { Pub. Other India Press, Goa, 2003}

three of these diaries, Narhari Parekh, the editor and publisher, has a longish introduction which at some length reproduces the discussion in the Yervada prison about Varna and Jati.

Sri Narhari Parekh says, 'Therefore Gandhiji is of the view that the Jātis should get destroyed and be replaced by varnavyavastha. Then a new life can arise in Hindu society. What he means by varna-vyavastha, he has made clear, in these three volumes based on his discussions with different persons. His first point is that varna should be according to occupation. Brahmin, kshatriya, Vaiśyas and sudra these are considered the original four varṇas. If because of the multiplicity of occupations the number of varṇas in society has to increase, he has no objection to that. The main basis of an occupation is that it is related to birth, that is, it becomes the duty of a son to engage in the occupation of the father.'[1]

In July 1946, Gandhi was so sure of his vision of Varṇashrama that he declared; 'If I live up to 125 years, I do expect to convert the entire Hindu society to my view.[2]

While Gandhi speaks in favour of Varṇadharma, let us take a comprehensive note of this which may be presented in these words[3]: The varna-scheme could be said to be intended to promote social organization in another direction also. It seeks to build up and promote social equilibrium and solidarity

1. Narhari Parekh: Diaries of Mahadev Desai 1932-1933 (in Hindi, published 1948-1951), Navajeevan Prakashan Mandir, Ahmedabad: volume3; in the introduction, pp 5-6, Narhari Parekh sums up the views of Gandhiji on varṇas and cates.The three volumes are : vol. I 10.3 1932-4.91932, pp 404 (Rs. 5), December 1948; vol II 5.9.1932-1.1.1933, pp 448 (Rs 5), April 1950; vol III 2.1.1933-20.8.1933, pp 524 (Rs 6), July 1951. These volumes were published in English in 1953 after some editing by the Navjivan Press.
2. Collected Works, Vol. 85, pp.23-28
3. This note is based upon the views of Prof. P. Prabhu presented by him in his book ' Hindu Social Organisation'

through a special kind of economic organization. Thus, the varna-dharma denies the accumulation of wealth to the Brāhmaṇa; his main dharma lies in spiritual and intellectual quests. The Kṣatriya may accumulate wealth, but with a view to strengthening mainly the economic resources of the society of which he is a member and not for the purpose of hoarding merely for personal use. In this way, the three varṇas are expected to make their efforts towards a constructive contribution to the social well-being. But there is always bound to be, in any society, a class of individuals, which is by nature incapable of contributing directly in any very constructive manner to the society; such a class, designated as the Śūdra, may assist the others who are doing actual constructive work, by directing their energies towards the service of the varṇas. That there was no question of prestige and dignity involved in such a classification is evident from the fact that accroding to the theory, each person is said to be born a Śūdra; and, we may say, he should be so regarded unless and until he shows his hand in any of the superior modes of constructive social contribution. On the whole, therefore the varna-theory was devised with a view to engaging the different types of human energies in different channels suitable to each of them, and all towards the social organization, social stability and social progress.

It may be added in favour of Gandhi's thought that the one big difference between the origin, development and stability of social classes in India and anywhere else is the fact that elsewhere, class-status is acquired as a concomitant or corollary of wealth, and is accompanied by power and authority, whereas in Hindu India a perfect dissociation was attempted and even achieved between wealth and status, between power and authority, between disinterested pursuit and achievements in science on the one hand, and temptations of worldly comforts on the other.

But whereas Gandhi's Varṇa Dharma is mainly based upon occupation related to birth, the doubts of Ambedkar seem to be justified, as he says that 'Gandhi is deceiving the people by preaching caste under the name of Varṇa'.

As a matter of fact Varna theory classifies society into four in terms of the dominant Gunas, activities and occupations, which is the individuals's psychological make up - of his tendencies, dispositions, inclinations, interests and inspirations. According to Aurbindo '*The ancient system of the four orders had a triple aspect; it takes a social and economic, a cultural and a spiritual form.*' If we relate it with birth then we may not be able to justify its original thought. There are some researches[1] in the west by psychiarists, anthropologists and social scientists which have given great importance to hereditory genius, while covering the concerned questions or issues of class system like; the basic importance and influence of heredity, descent, parentage, ancestry and enviroment etc. These modern western studies classfy a society on the basis of castes in particular and different groups in general.

7.3.8 Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a great thinker of twentith Century, will be remembered by humanity for his protest movement for justice to downtrodden masses of this country. He found the roots of injustice towards untouchables in the Hindu Social order of "Chaturvarṇa Vyavastha". Because it does not recognize the individual as the centre of social purpose for them primarily class or varna is the base. Under this system

1. A. G.M. Carastairs: "The twice-born: A study of a communty of high-caste Hindus, Hogarth, London, 1957. B. R.M. Maclver: "Community" C. C.H. Cooley: "Social organisation" D. L.F. Ward: social classes and sociology theory," in American Journol of sociology vol. xiii, pp. 617-627 E.Galton, F.: "Hereditary genius, 1869, Natural Inheritance, 1889

there is no room for individual merit and no consideration of individual Justice.

According to him the Hindu Social order is reared on following three principles.

(1) the principle of graded inequality

(2) the fixity of occupation for each class and continuance of heredity and

(3) the fixation of people within their respective classes, no social interrelation, which closes all channels of social endomosis.

This official doctrine of the Hindu social system is opposed to fraterity, equality and liberty of the individual.

Dr. Ambedkar found that the system of chaturvarnya limits the opportunities which a person can have for earning an honourable living. In the beginning there were only four classes, which resulted into four thousand castes today. This class system is the father of the institution of caste. Now the Hindu society is a myth. It is only a collections of castes. There is no integrating force among the Hindus to counteract the disintegration caused by caste system.

According to him other societies (Muslims, Christians etc.) also have the class system. But they fundamentally differ from Hindus. Caste system of Hindus has not only religious consecration but also a sacred institution. Religion compels the Hindus to treat isolation and segregation of caste as a virtue. Every Hindu law book has recognised caste as a legal institution. The social, religious and sacred beliefs are closely united.

In the abovestated thought Ambedkar rightly points out that this theory of chaturvarna (in the form of castes) not only kills the dignity of an individual but is also responsible for the decay of Hindu society.

In the Vedic age there was freedom for individual to change his Vanra as per his performance in the society. But

the system of this age does not permit that. In this context while we are comparing the view of Dr. Ambedkar, a statement of his is very important.

: — "While I reject the Vedic Varṇa Vyavastha, I must admit that the Vedic theory of Varṇa as interpreted by Swami Dayananda and some others is a sensible and an inoffensive thing. The Mahatma's view of Varṇa not only makes nonsense of the Vedic Varṇa but makes it an abominable thing."[1]

7.4 Epilogue

Today, in India, the society has reached a stage, when traditional institutions are being shattered by the impact of thoughts of a new social order and globalization. Indian society has to decide whether it wishes to do away with institutions like caste or retain the varna-caste institutions as the foundation of society. After that we will be able to build a new social order which can combat the challenges of current age.

As we have seen in previous pages while dealing with the origin and characteristics of the Varṇa-caste system in India, that this system like every great institution has its extremes of good and evil. We Quite agree with Bharataratna P. V. Kane who points out that " to discuss the feasibility or desirability of totally destroying the caste system or the ways and means of attaining that end is deemed to be outside the legitimate limits of this volume. It may, however, be expressly stated as the author's opinion, in order to avoid misunderstandings or fruitless speculations about his personal views, that he does not think that the caste system was an artificial product due to the intrigues, greed and cunning of

1. This matter is based upon P. 36–54. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, S. N. Mandal, National Publishing house, N. D.

Brāhmaṇas, nor does he hold that it is feasible to destroy the whole edifice of the caste system in the near future."[1]

Today, we find that Indian Society is floundering under the shadow of a new type of caste-solidarity (trying to manifest itself.) There is a marked tendency in every caste to form its own association. In olden times the caste panchayata was usually restricted to the confines of a limited area. But this caste-consciousness has extended from villages to distant shores.

The community-aspect of caste has thus been made more comprehensive, extensive, and permanent. More and more of an individual's interests are being catered to by the castes, and the needy who are helped by their caste-funds naturally owe much to their caste and later in life look upon it with feelings of gratitude and pride. They feel it their proud duty to strengthen the caste-organization, remembering their obligations to it. Thus a vicious circle has been created. The feeling of caste-solidarity is now so strong that it is truly described as caste-patriotism. Caste has thus become the centre of an individual's altruistic impulse and philanthropic activities. Some organizations exist only because of the caste feelings of its members. Compelled by the desire to help one's caste-fellows, many forget the principles of social justice, and are led to do, consciously or otherwise, injustice to the members of other castes. Unfortunately many leaders in civic life are associated with the movement of amelioration of their respective castes.

We can thus conclude that some kind of classification or division is bound to exist in all human societies vis-a-vis their natural abilities, capacities, intelligence and aptitude. But, if the social classification is unavoidable in the human

1. Hist. of Dharmasastra, Vol.ll, part 2, p.22

society is it possible in any form to check the separatist tendencies, which develop into a rigid stratification, like caste system, which leads to concentration of power, authority and prestige all together for the selected classes. In the words of Prof. Prabhu "if the formation of social classes is an inevitable phenomena in any society, it must work on the basis of cooperation and equality and not of competition and inequality. A cooperation among the varṇas based on the principle of division of labour in accordance with natural capacities and aptitudes will preserve the social energy and therefore is sure to make for progress. On the other hand, the separatist tendencies at present working among the castes are sure to create disruption in society. Social utility, and not class-dignity, should be the principle governing social differentiation into classes.[1]

1. ' Hindu Social Organisation ', p.334

Part II

1. Text – Vajrasūcī
2. Translation

वज्रसूची

जगद्गुरुं मञ्जुघोषं नत्वा वाक्कायचेतसा।
अश्वघोषो वज्रसूचीं सूत्रयामि यथामतम्॥ १॥
वेदाः प्रमाणं स्मृतयः प्रमाणं धर्मार्थयुक्तं वचनं प्रमाणम्।
यस्य प्रमाणं न भवेत्प्रमाणं कस्तस्य कुर्याद्वचनं प्रमाणम्॥ २॥

इह भवता यदिष्टं 'सर्ववर्णप्रधानं ब्राह्मणवर्ण' इति।

वयमत्र ब्रूमः,

1. कोऽयं ब्राह्मणो नाम ?

1.1. किं जीवः,

1.2. किं जातिः,

1.3. किं शरीरं

1.4. किं ज्ञानं,

1.5. किमाचारः,

1.6. किं कर्म,

1.7. किं वेद इति।

1.1. तत्र जीवस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.1.1 कस्मात् वेदस्य प्रामाण्यात्। उक्तं हि वेदे -

'ओं सूर्यः पशुरासीत् सोमः पशुरासीत् इन्द्रः पशुरासीत्।' पशवो देवाः। आद्यन्ते देवपशवः। श्वपाका अपि देवा भवन्ति।

अतो वेदप्रामाण्यान्मन्यामहे जीवत्वाद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.1.2 भारतप्रामाण्यादपि। उक्तं हि भारते-

सप्तव्याधा दशार्णेषु मृगाः कालञ्जरे गिरौ॥
चक्रवाकाः शरद्वीपे हंसाःसरसि मानसे॥ ३॥
तेऽपि जाताः कुरुक्षेत्रे ब्राह्मणा वेदपारगाः॥ ४॥

अतो भारतप्रामाण्याद् व्याधमृगहंसचक्रवाकदर्शनसम्भवान्मन्यामहे जीवस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.1.3 मानवधर्मप्रामाण्यादपि । उक्तं हि मानवे धर्मे -

अधीत्य चतुरो वेदान्साङ्गोपाङ्गेन तत्त्वतः।।
शूद्रात्प्रतिग्रहग्राही ब्राह्मणो जायते खरः।। ५।।
खरो द्वादशजन्मानि षष्टिजन्मानि सूकरः।।
श्वानः सप्ततिजन्मानि–इत्येवं मनुरब्रवीत्।। ६।।

अतो मानवधर्मप्रामाण्याज्जीवस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति।।

1.2. जातिरपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.2.1 कस्मात् स्मृतिप्रामाण्यात्। उक्तं हि स्मृतौ -

हस्तिन्यामचलो जात उलूक्यां केशपिङ्गलः।
अगस्त्योऽगस्तिपुष्पाच्च कौशिकः कुशसंभवः।।७।।
कपिलः कपिलाजातः शरगुल्माच्च गौतमः।
द्रोणाचार्यस्तु कलशात्तित्तिरिस्तित्तिरीसुतः।। ८।।
रेणुकाऽजनयद्राममृष्यश्रृङ्गमुनिं मृगी।
कैवर्तिन्यजनयद् व्यासं कुशिकं चैव शूद्रिका।। ९।।
विश्वामित्रं च चण्डाली वसिष्ठं चैव उर्वशी।।
न तेषां ब्राह्मणी माता लोकाचाराच्च ब्राह्मणाः।।१०।।

अतः स्मृतिप्रामाण्यान्मन्यामहे जातिस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.2.2 अथ मन्यसे माता वाऽब्राह्मणी भवेत्। तेषां पिता ब्राह्मणस्ततो ब्राह्मणो भवतीति। यद्येवं दासीपुत्रा अपि ब्राह्मणजनिता ब्राह्मणा भवेयुः। न चैतद् भवतामिष्टम्।

1.2.3 किं च। यदि ब्राह्मणपुत्रो ब्राह्मणस्तर्हि ब्राह्मणाभावः प्राप्नोति। इदानीन्तनेषु ब्राह्मणेषु पितरि सन्देहात्। गोत्रब्राह्मणमारभ्य ब्राह्मणीनां शूद्राभिगमनदर्शनात्। अतो जातिर्ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

१.२.४ मानवधर्मप्रामाण्यादपि। उक्तं हि मानवे धर्मे-

सद्यः पतति मांसेन लाक्षया लवणेन च।
त्र्यहाच्छूद्रश्च भवति ब्राह्मणः क्षीरविक्रयी।। ११।।
आकाशगामिनो विप्राः पतन्ते मांसभक्षणात् ।
विप्राणां पतनं दृष्ट्वा ततो मांसानि वर्जयेत्।।१२।।

अतो मानवधर्मप्रामाण्याज्जातिस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.2.5 यदि हि जातिर्ब्राह्मणः स्यात्, तदा पतने शूद्रभावो नोपपद्यते। किं खलु दुष्टोऽप्यश्वः सूकरो भवेत्। तस्माज्जातिरपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.3 शरीरमपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति। कस्माद्।

1.3.1 यदि शरीरं ब्राह्मणः स्यात् तर्हि पावकोऽपि ब्रह्महा स्याद्।

1.3.2 ब्रह्महत्या च बंधूनां शरीरदहनाद्भवेद्। ब्राह्मणशरीरनिष्यन्दजाताश्च क्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्रा अपि ब्राह्मणाः स्युः। न चैतद् दृष्टम्।

1.3.3 ब्राह्मणशरीरविनाशाच्च यजनयाजनाध्ययनाध्यापनदानप्रतिग्रहादीनां ब्राह्मणशरीरजनितानां फलस्य विनाशः स्यात्। न चैतदिष्टम्। अतो मन्यामहे शरीरमपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.4 ज्ञानमपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति। कुतः। ज्ञानबाहुल्याद्। ये ये ज्ञानवन्तः शूद्रास्ते सर्व एव ब्राह्मणाः स्युः। दृश्यन्ते च क्वचित् शूद्रा अपि वेदव्याकरण-मीमांसासांख्यवैशेषिकलग्नाजीवकादिसर्वशास्त्रार्थविदः। न च ते ब्राह्मणाः स्युः। अतो मन्यामहे ज्ञानमपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.5 आचारोऽपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति। कुतः। यद्याचारो ब्राह्मणः स्यात् तदा ये य आचारवन्तः शूद्रास्ते सर्वे ब्राह्मणाः स्युः। दृश्यन्ते च नटभटकैवर्तभंडप्रभृतयः प्रचंडतरविविधचारवंतो न च ते ब्राह्मणा भवन्ति। तस्मादाचारोऽपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.6 कर्मापि ब्राह्मणो न भवति। कुतः। दृश्यन्ते हि क्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्रा यजनयाजना-ध्ययनाध्यापनदानप्रतिग्रहप्रसङ्गविविधनि कर्माणि कुर्वन्तो न च ते ब्राह्मणा भवतां सम्मताः। तस्मात्कर्मापि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

1.7 वेदेनापि ब्राह्मणो न भवति।

कस्माद् रावणो नाम राक्षसोऽभूत् तेनाधीताश्चत्वारो वेदाः ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदश्चेति। राक्षसानामपि गृहे गृहे वेदव्यवहारः प्रवर्तत एव। न च ते ब्राह्मणाः स्युः। अतो मन्यामहे वेदेनापि ब्राह्मणो न भवतीति।

2. कथं तर्हि ब्राह्मणत्वं भवति?

2.1 उच्यते-

ब्राह्मणत्वं न शास्त्रेण न संस्कारैर्न जातिभिः।
न कुलेन न वेदेन न कर्मणा भवेत्ततः॥ १३॥

कुन्देन्दुधवलं हि ब्राह्मणत्वं नाम सर्वपापस्यापाकरणमिति।

2.2 उक्तं हि - व्रततपोनियमोपवासदानदमशमसंयमोपचाराच्च।

2.3 तथा चोक्तं वेदे-

निर्ममो निरहङ्कारो निःसङ्गो निष्परिग्रहः।
रागद्वेषविनिर्मुक्तस्तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः॥१४॥

सर्वशास्त्रेऽप्युक्तं

सत्यं ब्रह्म तपो ब्रह्म ब्रह्म चेन्द्रियनिग्रहः।
सर्वभूते दया ब्रह्म एतद् ब्राह्मणलक्षणम्॥१५॥
सत्यं नास्ति तपो नास्ति नास्ति चेन्द्रियनिग्रहः।
सर्वभूते दया नास्ति एतच्चाण्डाललक्षणम्॥ १६॥
देवमानुषनारीणां तिर्यग्योनिगतेष्वपि॥
मैथुनं नाधिगच्छन्ति ते विप्रास्ते च ब्राह्मणाः इति ॥ १७॥

2.4 शुक्रेणाप्युक्तम् –

न जातिर्दृश्यते तावद् गुणाः कल्याणकारकाः॥
चण्डालोऽपि हि तत्रस्थस्तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः॥ १८॥

तस्मान्न जातिर्न जीवो न शरीरं न ज्ञानं नाचारो न कर्म न वेदो ब्राह्मण इति।

3. अन्यच्च भवतोक्तम्।

3.1 इह शूद्राणां प्रव्रज्या न विधीयते। ब्राह्मणशुश्रूषैव तेषां धर्मो विधीयते।

3.2 चतुर्षु वर्णेष्वन्ते वचनात्ते नीचा इति। यद्येवमिन्द्रोऽपि नीचः स्यात्। 'श्वयुवमघोनामतद्धित'[1] इति सूत्रवचनात्। श्वा इति कुक्कुरः। युवा इति पुरुषः। मघवा इति सुरेन्द्रः। तयोः श्वपुरुषयोरिन्द्र एव नीचः स्यात्। न चैतद् दृष्टम्। किं हि वचनमात्रेण दोषो भवति।

3.3 तथा च। उमामहेश्वरौ दन्तोष्ठमित्यपि लोके प्रयुज्यते। न च दन्ताः प्रागुत्पन्नाः, उमा वा। केवलं वर्णसमासमात्रं क्रियते। ब्रह्मक्षत्रविट्शूद्रा इति। तस्माद्या भवदीयप्रतिज्ञा ब्राह्मणशुश्रूषैव तेषां धर्मो, [सा] न भवति।

4. किं चानिश्चितोऽयं ब्राह्मणप्रसंगः।

उक्तं हि मानवे धर्मे –

वृषलीफेनपीतस्य निःश्वासोपहतस्य च।
तत्रैव च प्रसूतस्य निष्कृतिर्नोपलभ्यते॥१९॥
शूद्रीहस्तेन यो भुंक्ते मासमेकं निरंतरम्।
जीवमानो भवेच्छूद्रो मृतः श्वानश्च जायते॥ २०॥
शूद्रीपरिवृतो विप्रः शूद्री च गृहमेधिनी॥
वर्जितः पितृदेवेन रौरवं सोऽधिगच्छति॥२१॥

अतोऽस्य वचनस्य प्रामाण्यादनियतोऽयं ब्राह्मणप्रसंगः।

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1. पाणिनि, 6-4-133

5. किं चान्यत्। शूद्रोऽपि ब्राह्मणो भवति। को हेतुः। इह हि मानवे धर्मेऽभिहितम्–

अरिणीगर्भसंभूतः कठो नाम महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम् ॥ २२॥
कैवर्तीगर्भसंभूतो व्यासो नाम महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम् ॥ २३॥
उर्वशीगर्भसम्भूतो वसिष्ठोऽपि महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम् ॥ २४॥
हरिणीगर्भसंभूत ऋष्यश्रृंगो महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम् ॥ २५॥
चंडालीगर्भसंभूतो विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम्॥२६॥
ताण्डूलीगर्भसंभूतो नारदो हि महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम् ॥ २७॥
यतात्मा यतिर्भवति विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः।
तपसा तापसो जातो ब्रह्मचर्येण ब्राह्मणः॥२८॥
न च ते ब्राह्मणीपुत्रास्ते च लोकस्य ब्राह्मणाः।
शीलशौचमयं ब्रह्म तस्मात्कुलमकारणम्॥२९॥
शीलं प्रधानं न कुलं प्रधानं
कुलेन किं शीलविवर्जितेन।
बहवो नरा नीचकुलप्रसूताः
स्वर्गं गताः शीलमुपेत्य धीराः॥३०॥

6. के पुनस्ते कठव्यासवसिष्ठऋष्यश्रृंगविश्वामित्रप्रभृतयो ब्रह्मर्षयो नीचकुल-प्रसूतास्ते च लोकस्य ब्राह्मणाः। तस्मादस्य वचनस्य प्रामाण्यादप्यनियतोऽयं ब्राह्मण-प्रसंगः इति। शूद्रकुलोऽपि ब्राह्मणो भवति।

7 किं चाप्यन्यद् भवदीयमतम् –

मुखतो ब्राह्मणो जातो बाहुभ्यां क्षत्रियस्तथा।
ऊरुभ्यां वैश्यः संजातः पद्भ्यां शूद्रक एव च॥

अत्रोच्यते। ब्राह्मणा बहवो न ज्ञायन्ते। कुतो मुखतो जाता ब्राह्मणा इति। इह हि कैवर्तरजकचंडालकुलेष्वपि ब्राह्मणाः सन्ति। तेषामपि चूडाकरण-मुञ्जदण्डकाष्ठादिभिः संस्काराः क्रियन्ते। तेषामपि ब्राह्मणसंज्ञा क्रियते। तस्माद् ब्राह्मणवत् क्षत्रियादयोऽपीति पश्यामः।

8. एकवर्णो, नास्ति चातुर्वर्ण्यमिति। अपि च। एकपुरुषोत्पन्नानां कथं चातुर्वर्ण्यम्। इह कश्चिद् देवदत्त एकस्यां स्त्र्यां चतुरः पुत्रान् जनयति न च तेषां वर्णभेदोऽस्ति। अयं ब्राह्मणोऽयं क्षत्रियोऽयं वैश्योऽयं शूद्र इति। कस्माद्। एकपितृकत्वाद्। एवं ब्राह्मणादीनां कथं चातुर्वर्ण्यम्।

8.1 इह हि गोहस्त्यश्वमृगसिंहव्याघ्रादीनां पदविशेषो दृष्टः। गोपदमिदं हस्तिपदमिदं अश्वपदमिदं मृगपदमिदं सिंहपदमिदं व्याघ्रपदमिदमिति। न च ब्राह्मणादीनाम्। ब्राह्मणपदमिदं क्षत्रियपदमिदं वैश्यपदमिदं शूद्रपदमिदमिति। अतः पदविशेषाभावादपि पश्याम एकवर्णो, नास्ति चातुर्वर्ण्यमिति।

8.2 इह गोमहिषाश्वकुंजरखरवानरछागैडकादीनां भगलिंगवर्ण-संस्थानमलमूत्रगंधध्वनिविशेषो दृष्टः न तु ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियादीनाम्। अतोप्यविशेषादेक एव वर्ण इति।

8.3 अपि च। यथा हंसपारावतशुककोकिलशिखण्डिप्रभृतीनां रूपवर्णलोमतुंडविशेषो दृष्टः न तथा ब्राह्मणादीनाम्। अतोप्यविशेषादेक एव वर्ण इति।

8.4 यथा वटबकुलपलाशाशोकतमालनागकेशरशिरीषचंपकप्रभृतीनां वृक्षाणां विशेषो दृश्यते। पदतो दंडतश्च पत्रतश्च पुष्पतश्च फलतश्च त्वगस्थिबीजरसगंधतश्च न तथा ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविट्शूद्राणाम् अंगप्रत्यंगविशेषो न च त्वङ्मांसशोणिता-स्थिशुक्रमलवर्णसंस्थानविशेषणं नापि प्रसवविशेषो दृश्यते। ततोऽप्यविशेषादेक एव वर्णो भवति।

8.5 अपि भो ब्राह्मण सुखदुःखजीवितबुद्धिव्यापारव्यवहारमरणोत्पत्तिभय-मैथुनोपचारसमतया नास्त्येव विशेषो ब्राह्मणादीनाम्। इदं चावगम्यताम्।

8.6 यथैकवृक्षोत्पन्नानां फलानां नास्ति वर्णभेदः उदुंबरपणसफलवद्। उदुंबरस्य हि पणसस्य च फलानि कानिचित् शाखातो भवन्ति कानिचिद् दंडतः कानिचित्स्कंधतः कानिचिन्मूलतः। न च तेषां भेदोऽस्तीदम्। इदं ब्राह्मणफलम् इदं क्षत्रियफलम् इदं वैश्यफलम् इदं शूद्रफलमिति। एकवृक्षोत्पन्नत्वात्। एवं नराणामपि नास्ति भेदः एकपुरुषोत्पन्नत्वात्।

8.7 अन्यच्च दूषणं भवति। यदि मुखतो जातो भवति ब्राह्मणो ब्राह्मण्याः कुत उत्पत्तिः। मुखादेवेति चेद्। हंत तर्हि भवतां भगिनीप्रसंगः स्यात्। तथा गम्यागम्यं न संभाव्यते। तच्च लोकेऽत्यंतविरुद्धम्। तस्मादनियतं ब्राह्मण्यम्।

9. क्रियाविशेषेण खलु चतुर्वर्णव्यवस्था क्रियते। तथा च। युधिष्ठिराध्येषितेन वैशंपायनेनाभिहितं क्रियाविशेषतश् चातुर्वर्ण्यमिति।।

पाण्डोस्तु विश्रुतः पुत्रः स वै नाम्ना युधिष्ठिरः।
वैशंपायनमागम्य प्राञ्जलिः परिपृच्छति॥३२॥
के च ते ब्राह्मणाः प्रोक्ताः किं वा ब्राह्मणलक्षणम्।
एतदिच्छामि भो ज्ञातुं तद् भवान् व्याकरोतु मे ॥ ३३॥
वैशंपायन उवाच

9.1
क्षांत्यादिभिर्गुणैर्युक्तस्त्यक्तदंडो निरामिषः।
न हंति सर्वभूतानि प्रथमं ब्रह्मलक्षणम् ॥ ३४॥

9.2
यदा सर्वं परद्रव्यं पथि वा यदि वा गृहे।
अदत्तं नैव गृह्णाति द्वितीयं ब्रह्मलक्षणम्॥ ३५॥

9.3
त्यक्त्वा क्रूरस्वभावं तु निर्ममो निष्परिग्रहः।
मुक्तश्चरति यो नित्यं तृतीयं ब्रह्मलक्षणम् ॥ ३६॥

9.4
देवमानुषनारीणां तिर्यग्योनिगतेष्वपि।
मैथुनं हि सदा त्यक्तं चतुर्थं ब्रह्मलक्षणम्॥३७॥

9.5
सत्यं शौचं दया शौचं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः।
सर्वभूतदया शौचं तपः शौचञ्च पंचमम् ॥ ३८॥
पंचलक्षणसंपन्न ईदृशो यो भवेद् द्विजः।
तमहं ब्राह्मणं ब्रूयां शेषाः शूद्रा युधिष्ठिर॥३९॥
न कुलेन न जात्या वा क्रियाभिर्ब्राह्मणो भवेत्।
चंडालोऽपि हि वृत्तस्थो ब्राह्मणः स युधिष्ठिर॥४०॥
किं च भूयो वैशंपायनेनोक्तम्–
एकवर्णमिदं पूर्णं विश्वमासीद्युधिष्ठिर।
कर्मक्रियाविशेषेण चातुर्वर्ण्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ ४१॥
सर्वे वै योनिजा मर्त्याः सर्वे मूत्रपुरीषिणः।
एकेन्द्रियेन्द्रियार्थाश्च तस्माच्छीलगुणैर्द्विजाः ॥ ४२॥

शूद्रोऽपि शीलसंपन्नो गुणवान् ब्राह्मणो भवेत्।
ब्राह्मणोऽपि क्रियाहीनः शूद्रात्प्रत्यवरो भवेत्॥४३॥
इदं च वैशंपायनवाक्यम्–
पञ्चेन्द्रियार्णवं घोरं यदि शूद्रोऽपि तीर्णवान्।
तस्मै दानं प्रदातव्यमप्रमेयं युधिष्ठिर॥४४॥
न जातिर्दृश्यते राजन् गुणाः कल्याणकारकाः।
जीवितं यस्य धर्मार्थे परार्थे यस्य जीवितम्॥४५॥
अहोरात्रं चरेत्क्षान्तिं तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः॥
परित्यज्य गृह्णावासं ये स्थिता मोक्षकांक्षिणः।
कामेष्वसक्ताः कौंतेय ब्राह्मणास्ते युधिष्ठिर ॥४६॥
अहिंसा निर्ममत्वं चामतकृत्यस्य वर्जनम्।
रागद्वेषनिवृत्तिश्च एतद् ब्राह्मणलक्षणम्॥४७॥
क्षमा दया दमो दानं सत्यं शौचं स्मृतिर्घृणा॥
विद्याविज्ञानमास्तिक्यमेतद् ब्राह्मणलक्षणम्॥४८॥
गायत्रीमात्रसारोऽपि वरं विप्रः सुयन्त्रितः।
नायन्त्रितश्चतुर्वेदी सर्वाशी सर्वविक्रयी॥४९॥
एकरात्रोषितस्यापि या गतिर्ब्रह्मचारिणः।
न तत्क्रतुसहस्रेण प्राप्नुवंति युधिष्ठिर॥५०॥
पारगं सर्ववेदानां सर्वतीर्थाभिषेचनम्।
मुक्तश्चरति यो धर्मं तमेव ब्राह्मणं विदुः॥५१॥
यदा न कुरुते पापं सर्वभूतेषु दारुणम्।
कायेन मनसा वाचा ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा॥ इति॥५२॥
अस्माभिरुक्तं यदिदं द्विजानां मोहं निहंतुं हतबुद्धिकानाम्।
गृह्णन्तु संतो यदि युक्तमेतन् मुञ्चन्त्वथायुक्तमिदं यदि स्यात्॥53॥

कृतिरियं सिद्धाचार्याश्वघोषपादानामिति॥

Translation of Vajrasūcī

Bowing in reverence to Jagadguru Manjughoṣa[1], I compose Vajrasūcī in the form of sutras (precise form), in accordance with my ideas.

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1. **THE MANJUGHOSA**
The name Manjughoṣa (the sound or expression of manju) stresses the purification, performance and teaching of it. Such is the message of the large ritualistic work, *Manjuśrī-mūla-kalpa*, in Chapter 15:
Manjughoṣa, the youth (*kumara*), is always the purest among all creatures. As long as this instruction prevails, he will perform the deeds of the Buddha.
The cult of the Bodhisattva Manjuśrī was scarcely developed in the first century A.D. during the early Mahāyāna formation. Manjuśrī in time became an interlocutor in various Mahāyāna scriptures, as in the *Saptaśatikā Prajñāpāramita*, and others. An early interlocutor role is in a paramount scripture of Chinese Buddhism, the Pure Land sect, entitled *Ārya-aparimitāyurjñāna-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra*, about the heaven of the Buddha Amitayus. Manjuśrī appears as an interlocutor in various chapters of the celebrated *Saddharma-punḍarika-sūtra*, where Śāriputra, the early disciple (*prajña*), has an important role in early chapters. A number of later Mahāyāna scriptures show his name in the title: *Manjuśrīnirdesa, Manjuśrīpariprcchā, Manjuśrībuddhakṣetra- guṇavyūha, Manjuśrīvikurvanaparivarta, Manjuśrīvikridita.* In such titles, he appears as a Bodhisattva of the Tenth Stage as are Avalokiteśvara, Samantabhadra, Vajrapāṇi, and so on. In this sense he is representing Buddhahood, according to Prajñāpāramita teachings, but not complete Buddhahood. As his importance grew in Buddhist tantric works, Manjuśrī in the M-N-S and also in the *Kālacakratantra* tradition, became the "primordial Buddha" (*ādibuddha*).
Alex,Wayman, "Chanting the Names of Manjuśrī" (The Manjuśrī-Nāma-Saṃgīti), MLBD, Delhi, 1999, pp. 2-3

"Vedas are authorities. Smṛtis are authorities. Speeches containing the essence of Dharma are authorities. But who will honour the authority of a person who does not honour the authority of (Valid means) scriptures?"

The aim is to prove that the clan (Varṇa) of Brāhmaṇa is superior to all the other clans (Varṇas) but I would like to ask.

1. "What is (meant by the) Brāhmaṇa?"

(i) Is a living being (Jīva) a Brāhmaṇa?

(ii) Is caste (by birth) a Brāhmaṇa?

(iii) Is it a body (Śarīra)?

(iv) Is knowledge (Jñāna) a Brāhmaṇa?

(v) Is conduct (ācharaṇa) a Brāhmaṇa?

(vi) Is occupation (Karma) a Brāhmaṇa?

(vii) Is knowledge of the Veda a Brāhmaṇa?

1.1 A living being (Jīva) is not a Brāhmaṇa. How is it certified by the Vedas–

"The sun was an animal. Soma was an animal, Indra was an animal."

In other words gods are animals. A Chāndāla (Śvapāka[1] an outcaste) is also a god.

Thus, the Vedas support the view that one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa only because of his existence as a living being.

1.1.2 The Mahābhārata also confirms this view as it has been said there that,

"All of seven hunters" in a forest called Daśāraṇya, the Deers on the mountains of Kalanjara, Chakrawāka in Śārdweepa and the duck in the pond of Manas were born in Kurukshetra as Brāhmaṇas who had mastery over the Vedas.(3-4)

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1. A western scholar defines (as in 6.1.3 of this book) this word Śvapāka in the meaning of Chāndāla, while Indian scholars like R.N. Dwivedi denotes it in the eater of dog's meat.

From these words of the Mahābhārata it is proved that as a hunter, deer, duck, Chakrawāka etc. are born as Brāhmaṇa, so any living being (Jīva) one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa.

1.1.3 It has been said in the Mānavadharma also that if

A Brāhmaṇa even if having mastery over all four Vedas with all the branches of the Vedas, accepts any gift from the Śūdras, he degenerates as ass. He is born as an ass, a pig and a dog in his next 12th, 60th and 70th births respectively. Manu has said so.(5-6)

Thus Mānavadharma also expresses the view that inspite of being a living being (Jīva) he can not be a Brāhmaṇa.

1.2 According to Smrtis there can be no Brāhmaṇa by caste (birth) also.

1.2.1 It has been said in the Smrtis that–

Achala and Keśapingala were born of a she-elephant and owl. Agastya and Kauśika were given birth to by Agasti flower and Kuśa [a sacred grass] respectively. Kapila and Gauttama were born of Kapila [a brown cow] and Shalgulma [a clump of Shala = Shorea Robusta tree, a kind of medicianl plant] respectively. Tittiri (a sage said to be the first teacher of Black Yajurveda) was the son of a Partridge {a bird}. Dronachārya took birth from a pitcher (water pot). Paraśurāma and Riṣyasṛnga were born of Reṇuka [a bird] and a female deer-respectively. Kaivartini [a fisherwoman] and Śudrika [an untouchable woman] gave birth to Vyāsa and Kauśika respectively. Viśwāmitra and Vaśiṣtha were the sons of Chāndali [an outcast woman] and Urvashi [a dancing-girl at the court of Indra] respectively. Their mothers were not Brahmanis but they became Brāhmaṇas because of their good conduct that prevailed in the system at those days. (7-10)

Thus, on the basis of the Smṛtis it is proved that there can be no Brāhmaṇa because of caste.

If you say that if the mother was a non-Brāhmaṇa and a father was a Brāhmaṇa the children would be Brāhmaṇa then

all the boys born of maid servants will be Brāhmaṇas because their father were Brāhmaṇas. But this is not approved by you.

1.2.3 If it is presumed that only the sons of Brāhmaṇas are Brāhmaṇas, there will be dearth of Brāhmaṇas because there is always a doubt about the fathers of the Brāhmaṇas of now a days. It is because we see that Brāhmaṇis born in the family of Brāhmaṇas have sexual relations with Śūdras also. Therefore there can be no Brāhmaṇas on the basis of caste.

1.2.4 It has been said also in the Mānavadharma that

"By selling flesh, lac, dye, or salt, he shall degenerate the very day he sells these things, by selling milk a Brāhmaṇa shall become Śūdra in the course of three days." A Brāhmaṇa travelling in the sky falls down on the earth if he eats meat. Meat eating should be given up on seeing a Brāhmaṇa falling down on the earth.

Thus, Mānavadharma confirms that no one can be a Brāhmaṇa because of his caste.

1.2.5 If a person is a Brāhmaṇa by caste, he can not be a Śūdras by merely falling down. Can a sick horse be a pig? Therefore there is no Brāhmaṇa by caste.

1.3 There can be no Brāhmaṇa because of body also because

1.3.1 If the body is a Brāhmaṇa, then fire (Pāvaka = purifier god) also will be a sinner for burning the body of a Brāhmaṇa.

1.3.2 Brāhmaṇas will commit the sin of murdering Brāhmaṇas in case they burn the dead bodies of their relatives (in the crematorium).

Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdras also will become Brāhmaṇas after coming in contact with the Brāhmaṇas. But it never happens.

1.3.3 After the destruction of the body of a Brāhmaṇa

things like prayer, worship, studies, teachings, gifts (Dāna)[1] and fruit born out of it also will be destroyed. But it is not approved (by you). Therefore we understand that one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa because of body.

1.4 Because of knowledge one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa. Because abundance of knowledge has no value, otherwise all learned Śūdras will become Brāhmaṇas. Sometimes it is seen that even Śūdras get mastery over the Vedas, Vyākaraṇa, Mīmāṃsā, Sānkhya, Vaiśeṣika, Jyotiṣa etc. but they do not become Brāhmaṇas. Thus, we can say that knowledge also is not the cause of Brāhmaṇahood.

1.5 Because of good conduct also one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa. If it had been so, all the Śūdras with good conduct (and character) will become Brāhmaṇas. It is seen that many 'Naṭa'[a dancer], 'Bhaṭa'[a warrior],'Kaivarta'[fishermen], 'Bhanḍa'[a buffoon] etc. are equipped with (good character and) conduct but they cannot become Brāhmaṇas. Thus it can be said that one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa because of his conduct.

1.6 Nobody can be a Brāhmaṇa by virtue of his occupation. It is because we see that Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śūdras though blessed with the virtues of prayer, studies, sermons and teachings, gift, benevolence etc. are not accepted by you as Brāhmaṇas. Thus there can be no Brāhmaṇas because of occupation (or job).

1.7 One cannot be a Brāhmaṇa because of having acquired the knowledge of the Vedas because there was a Brāhmaṇa named Rāvaṇa who had studied all the Vedas– Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and Atharvaveda. The Vedas were practiced in each and every house of the Rākṣasas but they were not accepted as Brāhmaṇas. Thus we hold the view that one cannot be a Brāhmaṇa beause of the knowledge of Vedas also.

1. Six duties of a Brāhmaṇa as described in Smṛties

2. Then how can Brāhmaṇahood be acquired?

2.1 It is said that Brāhmaṇahood cannot be acquired either by means of the scriptures or purification (Saṃskaras), or caste, nor by family or the Vedas or the occupation.(13)

Brāhmaṇahood represents a stage in the spiritual advancement. It is the removal of all sins; it is white and pure like the Kunda flower and moon.

2.2 It has been said that Brāhmaṇahood can be had by observing vrata (religious vows), tapas (austerity), 'Niyama'(voluntary religious observation), 'Upavāsa' (fasting), 'Dāna' (Donation) 'Dama' (self restraint), 'Śama'(mental quietness) and Saṃyama'(self control).

2.3 It has been said in the Vedas also that one who is free from the sense of attachment, vanity, fear, accumulation, greed and ill will should be known as a Brāhmạṇa.(14)

It has been said in all the scriptures that "truth (satya), penance (tapas), control over the senses (indriyanigraha) and as well as kindness towards all living beings (sarvabhūtadayā) are the characteristic features of a Brāhmaṇa.(15) Those who are without these virtues are actually 'Chāṇḍālas' (outcasts).(16)"

Those who do not have sexual relation with women even when they are born as gods, men or Tiryak(animal), such 'Vipras' are the real Brāhmaṇas. (17)

2.4 Śukra also said "birth (cast) is not a decisive factor for Brāhmaṇahood, as welfare oriented qualities even of Chāṇḍāla are considered by Gods as those of Brāhmaṇas.

Therefore Brāhmaṇahood can not be identified with the Jāti (caste, by birth)) Jīva (Soul), body, knowledge, conduct, karma (occupation) or Veda (knowledge of the Vedas).

3. Position and Role of Śūdras in the Society

3.1 You have said that Śūdras cannot take to

ASCETICISM. They are meant to serve the Brāhmaṇas and they are the lowest beings and are mentioned as the last in the list of four varnas.

3.2 If it is so, Indra (Chief of God) is also the lowest, because (Pāṇini)sūtra–Śvayuvamaghonā-mataddhite" has put his name in the last. Śva means dog, Yuvā means man and Maghavā is Surendra (king of gods). That shows that in comparison with dog and man Indra is lower. But this is not so.

3.3 For example, in society it is said *Umāmaheswarau* {Umā and Maheshwara} and *Dantoṣtham* {teeth and lip} (such composit words are used). Does Umā take birth before Maheswara and teeth generates before lips? In language such compound words are made likewise Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra is only a sequence (only a composition).

Therefore your declaration that service of Brāhmaṇa is the only duty of Śūdra is not correct.

4. Therefore, the concept of Brāhmaṇahood is not clear. It is said in Mānava Dharma (Manu's saying).

"By sucking the lips of a Śūdra woman, by inhaling her breath, or by begetting children by her a twice-born can never find any succour."(19)

"If a Brāhmaṇa eats food cooked by a female Śūdra for one month continuously, he becomes a Śūdra in life and a dog after death."(20)

"If a Brāhmaṇa is surrounded (or served) by a female Śūdra or she is running his house, he is forsaken by Pitrdevas (fore fathers) and after death he falls into the hell called Raurava."(21)

Your own words prove that the concept of Brāhmaṇahood is not clearly defined.

5. That, Śūdra can acquire the Brāhmaṇahood through austerity, Cast-Jāti has no basis

Another point is that Śūdra also becomes a Brāhmaṇa (throught austerity). As stated in Mānava Dharma–

"A great sage Katha took birth from the womb of Arini, and by penance he became a Brāhmaṇa. Hence birth is not the determining factor."(22)

"A great sage Vyāsa was born from the womb of a fisherwoman and by penance he became a Brāhmaṇa. Hence birth is not the determining factor."(23)

"Vaśiṣtha, the great sage was born from Urvashi the female divinity. By penance he became a Brāhmaṇa. Hence birth is not the determining factor."(24)

A great sage Ṛṣyaśṛnga was born from the womb of a female deer. By penance he became a Brāhmaṇa. Hence birth is not the determining factor.(25)

"A great sage Viśvāmitra was born from Chāndali (most untouchable woman) and by penance he became a Brāhmaṇa. Hence birth is not the determining factor."(26)

"Nārada, the great sage took birth from the womb of Tanḍuli (a maidservant) but by penance he became a Brāhmaṇa. Hence birth is not the determining factor."(27)

One who has conquered self and his five sense organs is a Yatin (monk), ascetic fervour is the Jāti (identity), because of ascetic practice he becomes a Brāhmaṇa, so Jāti is not the basis." And Brahmacharya (life of purity) is the cause of Brāhmaṇahood.(28)

"Brāhmaṇī-putras (sons of a female Brāhmaṇa) (who are called Brāhmaṇa in the society) are not the Brāhmaṇa. He is a Brāhmaṇa who is endowed with good conduct and purity, therefore family (birth) is not the determining factor."(29)

"What is the use of taking birth in a Brāhmaṇa family, if

he is without pure conduct. So many Dhīras (brave and noble persons) who were born in a lower family have gone to heaven by their (pure) conduct."(30)

6. All great sages like Katha, Vyāsa, Vaśiṣtha, Ṛṣyaśṛnga, Viśvāmitra etc. were born in lower families but they were called Brāhmaṇa.

Therefore, these (abovestated) statements prove that the criteria accepted by you is not clear.

A man born in a family of Śūdra is also capable of becoming a Brāhmaṇa.

7. This is also your view that "The Brāhmaṇas sprang from the mouth, the Kṣatriyas from the arms, Vaiśyas from the thighs and Śūdras from the feet of the creator." (x.90, RV) (31)

To this, we say that so many Brāhmaṇas are not known because they sprang from the mouth. But in society we find many Brāhmaṇas among the families of Fishermen(Kaivartta), washermen and other untouchables (Chāṇḍālas).

Their sacraments like Chūḍakarma (the Tonsure Ceremony) etc. are well performed. They are entitled as Brāhmaṇa.

Therefore Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriyas etc. belong to one varṇa, there is only one varṇa not four varṇas.

8. There is only one Varna (Class), and classification into four varṇas is not correct.

How can sons born of the one Purusa (Creator) be divided into four Varṇas (classes). For example, there is a man called Devadatta, who gives birth, through a woman, to four sons. There is no difference of Varṇa (Class) among these sons. The Brāhmaṇas and other can not be different varnas because they are born of the same father. So classification into four varnas of Brāhmaṇa etc. is not correct.

8.1 There are specific words for all animals like cow, elephant, horse, deer, tiger, leopard etc. We call them differently like cow, elephant etc. But we never use such specific word in the case of human beings like this is Brāhmaṇa etc.

Therefore we conclude that there is only one Varṇa, not four.

8.2 There is distinction in the animals like Cow, Buffalo, Horse etc.- in their pudendum, organ, colour, shape, dung, urine, smell and sound. But there is no such distinction of any kind in the case of Brāhmaṇa and other varṇas.

Therefore human beings belong to only one varṇa.

8.3 Also, we find specific differences in shape {Appearance}, colour, tail, beaks and trunks of birds like swan, pigeon, parrot, cuckoo, peacock. But there is no such distinction in between a Brāhmaṇa and other human beings hence there is only one varṇa.

8.4 There is distinction as it noticed in trees bunyan, mimusops, butea frondosa, tonesia, garcinia, xanthocymus, rose-chestned, crocus, acacia, campa etc. in their trudnk, leaves, flowers, fruits, bark, kernel, seed, juice and smell in regard to body or parts, skin, flesh, blood, bone, semen, dung, colour, and shape.

There is no distinction in Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Viś and Śūdra with regard to body and its parts, skin, flesh, blood, bone semen, stool, colour and apperance nor is there any distinction in their life cycle (birth process).

8.5 There is similarity in all human beings in respect of pleasure, suffering, duration of life, intellgence, action, behaviar, death, birth, fear, sexual relation and medical treatment

Hence there should be only one Varṇa (class).

8.6 {Two further arguments against the supposed origin

of the four varṇas from four different parts of the body of creature}

8.6.1 The fruits growing on different parts of the jackfruits [udumbara] and fig [panas] trees, their twigs, trunk, branches and root do not differ as they grow on the same tree. How can we say that this is the fruit of Brāhmaṇa, this is the fruit of Kṣatriya etc. Therefore like trees, there is no difference in men as they are born of the same Puruṣa.

8.6.2 If you say that Brāhmaṇa originated from the mouth of the creator, the Brāhmaṇīs (Brāhmaṇa woman) also will have the same origin. Hence a Brāhmaṇa marrying a Brāhmaṇī will be marrying his own sister. This will mean marrying a prohibited girl, which is condemned in the society. Therefore it infers that Brāhmaṇahood is indeterminable.

9. (Firstly there was only one varṇa and then) on account of the difference in their action (specific conduct), the Chāturvarṇa was established.

As Vaiśampāyana said in response to Yudhiṣthira's query in the following words that classification of four varṇas is based upon specific conduct.

"A versatile scholar and the son of Pandu called Yudhisthira came to Vaiśampāyana and questioned with folded hands as to who are Brāhmaṇas and what is their definition? I want to know. Explain it to me."(32-33)

9.1 Vaiśampāyana said :–

"First the definition of a Brāhmaṇa is that he is endowed with the sense of service and forgiveness. He is a vegetarian and does not inflict injury on any being."(34)

9.2 Second definition of Brāhmaṇa is that he does not pick up any thing belonging to others, whether it is found on road or at home.(35)

9.3 Third definition of Brāhmaṇa is that he is the one

who gives up wickedness, cruelty, etc.and leads a life of detached and always lives in freedom.(36)

9.4 Fourth definition of Brāhmaṇa is that he does not indulge in sexual relation (sensual pleasure) whether he takes birth as gods, a human being or oblique stock.(37)

9.5 Fifth definition of Brāhmaṇa is that he is the one who follows the path of penance, truth, purity, compassion, controls sensual organs and is compassionate to all.(38)

"O Yudhiṣthira! If a Dwija is accomplished with aforesaid five characteristic qualities, I would call him a Brāhmaṇa, others are Śūdras.(39)

Not by family nor by birth (Jāti), but only by virtue of his specific conduct a man may be called a Brāhmaṇa. If a person born in the family of Chānḍāla (most downtrodden in the Śūdras) follows the above stated moral qualities that goes to make him a Brāhmaṇa.(40)

Vaiśampāyana eleborates more on this by saying

"O Yudhiṣthira! first there (in world=jagat) was only one varṇa and then on account of the difference in their specific action (kriyaviśeṣa) the fourfold system (chāturvarṇya) was established.(41)

All human biengs {mortals} are similar, they are born of the womb, Pass stool and urine in the same way. They have similar sensual organs which are after similar objects. "It is through the qualities of pure conduct that one becomes a Dwija."(42)

If a Śūdra is virtuous and is with good qualities (of pure conduct), he can attain Brāhmaṇahood, and on the other hand if a Brāhmaṇa is lacking in pure conduct, he is lower than a Śūdra.(43)

This is the saying of Vaiśampāyana :–

"O Yudhisthira! if a Śūdra is able to cross the deep sea of five sensual organs then Dāna (gift or donation) should be offered to him without hesitation."(44)

"The gods recognize him as a Brāhmaṇa whose life is for law (dharma), whose life is for others, who practices for bearance (kṣānti) day and night.(45)

"Who gives up family life and is always in pursuit of mokṣa (release from rebirth). O the son of Kunti, Yudhiṣthira! those who are not attached in desire, they are Brāhmaṇas."(46)

The Characteristics of a Brāhmaṇa are, he follows the principles of non-violence, there is absence of affection, abstinence from unapproved action and freedom from attachment and hatred."(47)

"Forbearance, mercy, control over senses, charity, truthfulness, purity, rememberance of law, compassion, learning and versatality in knowledges and faithfulness are the characteristics of the Brāhmaṇa."(48)

"A Vipra, who has control over his senses, knows the essence of Gāyatri Mantra, is nobler in comparison to the Brāhmaṇa who, despite of having complete knowledge of Vedas, has no control on his senses, eats even the most inedible things and deals with (business) all kinds of things."(49)

"A Brāhmaṇa is who moves freely and practices Brahmacharya (abstinence). Even if he does it for one night, it is more effective than thousands of Vedic rites (Kratus)."(50)

"One who is well versed in scriptures and is anointed with holy waters and treads on the path of Dharma is called a Brāhmaṇa."(51)

"When a man does not commit a dreadful sin to any living being by his body, mind and speech he attains the status of Brāhmaṇa."(52)

"As we have said that the statements in the text are meant to destroy the delusion of those Dwijas who have lost all their senses. Pious persons should accept it, if they think it is right. And if they think it is wrong then they may despond (will be under delusion for ever)."(53)

This work is written by Siddhacharya Aśvaghoṣa.

Appendix-I

लघुटंकः[1]

ब्रह्मण्यं दुष्टदमनं सत्पतिं जगदीश्वरम्।।
नत्वा सद्युक्तिटंकेन वज्रसूचीं भिनद्म्यहम्।।१।।
वेदाश्च भिन्नाः स्मृतयश्च भिन्नास्तथामुनीनां मतयश्च भिन्नाः।।
धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायां महाजनो येन गतः स पंथाः।। २।।

इह खलु वर्णिनां ब्राह्मणो गुरुरितिवचनतः लोके सर्वत्र प्रसिद्धशिष्टानुमताचारतश्च श्रैष्ठ्यं प्राप्तस्य ब्राह्मणत्वस्योत्कर्षमसहिष्णुना किल भवताऽयं प्रश्नः कृतः कोऽयं ब्राह्मणो नामेति न चैतावताऽलंकृतं पुनश्च किं जीवः किं जातिः किं शरीरं किं ज्ञानं किं ज्ञानं किमाचारः किं कर्म किं वेद इति। अत्राद्यः कोऽयं ब्राह्मणो नामेति प्रश्नः अबोधादपि संगच्छते किं जीव इत्याद्यस्तु केवलमाक्षेप एव लक्ष्यते। अत उक्तमसहिष्णुनेति अस्तु **यदुक्तं भवता किं शरीरं ब्राह्मण** इति वयमत्र ब्रूमः किं तच्छरीरनाम किं मूर्धा किं कंधरा किं बाहू किं वक्षः किं कुक्षिः किं वस्तिः किं त्रिकं किं सीवनी किमपानं किं पादौ किं चको वाऽयं बाहुर्नाम किमंसः किं प्रगंडः किं कूर्परः किं प्रकोष्ठः किं मणिबंधः किं करभः किं करशाखाः किं नखा इति एवं पृथग्विचार्यमाणे सर्वावयवानां स्वस्वावच्छेदकावच्छिन्नत्वाद् अवयविनोऽभाव एव प्रतीयते अत एव श्रुत्यर्थ। **विकारो नामधेयं यद्वाचारंभणमुच्यते। तस्मान्मिथ्यैव तत्सर्वं सत्यं स्यात्सर्वकारणमिति।।**

एवं सत्यप्यवयविना विशेषव्यवहारनिर्वाहस्य प्रत्यक्षानुभवसिद्धत्वात् समवायादिकारणैः कपालद्वयसंयोगस्य घट इति नामेत्यादिना अवयवी स्वीकृतः। एवं चोक्तावयवानां यथास्थानसंयोगस्यैव शरीरनिति नामेति वाच्यं तथैवात्रापि उक्तविकल्पसमस्तेनैव ब्राह्मण इति। अनेन ब्राह्मणदंपत्योः सुतः श्रुतिविहितजातकोपनयनादिकर्मसंस्कृतः सदाचारसंपन्नो वेदाध्यायी ज्ञानवान् संपूर्णब्राह्मणो भवतीत्युत्तरमुक्तं भवति। तर्हि तस्मिन्नेकस्याप्यभावे ब्राह्मणत्वं न

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1. A reply to the Vajrasūcī by Pt. Soobaji Bapoo [1937 AD]

स्यादिति चेन्न। यथा शरीरे हस्तपा दादिविकलत्वे कुणि: खंज: पंगु: काण: अंध इत्यादि विशेषनाममात्राधिक्यं परंतु न शरीरत्वहानि: एवमत्रापि कर्मजड़त्वे।

अनागतां तु यः पूर्वां सादित्यां चैव पश्चिमाम्।
उपासीत द्विजः संध्यां न सर्वोऽब्राह्मणः स्मृत इति॥

अब्राह्मण: संपूर्णब्राह्मणो न भवतीत्यर्थ:। संप्रोक्तो ब्राह्मणब्रुवा इत्यादि विशेषनाममात्रमेव न तु ब्राह्मणत्वहानि:। किं च यथा तत्रापि उत्तमांगहीने कबंधत्वमेव न तु शरीरत्वं तथात्रापि सावित्र्युपदेशाभावादिपातिन्यसंपादकदोषे कृते व्रात्य: पतित इत्येव स्यात् न ब्राह्मण इति यथोक्तमाश्वालयनचरणेन-**अत ऊर्ध्वं पतित सावित्रीका भवन्ति नैनानुपनयेन्नाध्यापयेन्नैभिर्व्यवहरेयुरिति**। एवं समासेन सर्वविषयोत्तरस्य दत्तप्रायत्वेऽपि भवत्कृतपृथक्पृथङ्.निराकरणस्याप्युत्तरं दीयते श्रृणु तावत्।

मूलं- जीवस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवतीत्यादि॥ अस्योत्तरम्॥

1.1 अत्र पृथग्विचार्यमाणे जीवो ब्राह्मणो न भवति शूद्रोऽपि न भवति। उक्तं चाध्यात्मरामायणे रामचंद्रेण-

न स्त्री पुमान्न षंडो वाजीवः सर्वगतोऽव्यय इति॥

एवं वस्तुत: केवलस्य पुरुषत्वस्त्रीत्ववर्णत्वाद्यभावेऽपि संयोगबलेन तु घटते। यथा तत्रैव।

यथा विशुद्धस्फटिकोऽलक्तकादिसमीपग। तत्तद्वर्णयुगाभातीति॥

यथा पुरुषादिशरीराविष्टस्तत्तद्योग्यव्यवहारं निर्वहन् तज्जनितसुखदु:खादिकमनुभवति। यथा गीतायां-

कार्यकारणकर्त्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यत इति॥

13-20,गीता

तथा ब्राह्मणादिशरीराविष्टस्तत्तद्वर्णाश्रमविहितकर्म कुर्वन् तस्य सांगव्यंगत्वेन तज्जनितसुकृतदुष्कृतं फलं भुंक्ते। तदर्थमुत्तमाधमशरीरधारणमप्यविरुद्धमेव।। यथा गीतायां-

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुंक्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान्।
कारणं गुणसंगोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु॥

13-21॥

तथा च भागवते 3 स्कंधे 30 अधयाये-

अधस्तान्नरलोकस्य यावतीर्यातनादयः।
क्रमशः समनुक्रम्य पुनरत्राव्रजेच्छुचिरिति॥

3-30-34

नरलोकस्य नरदेहस्याधस्तात् तिर्यक्शरीर इत्यर्थः। तस्मात् भारतोक्तव्याध-मृगहंसचक्रवाकादीनां ब्राह्मणत्वं देहांतरे नाश्चर्यकारकम्। वेदमनुवचनविरोधविवरणम् अग्रे भविष्यति। अनुभवकाले तत्त्वमपि सिध्यति। अतो यावद् ब्राह्मणशरीरा-विष्टस्तावज्जीवोऽपि ब्राह्मण एव अहं ब्राह्मण इति दृढप्रत्ययदर्शनात्।

1.2 ननु सति कुड्ये चित्रमिति न्यायात् ब्राह्मणशरीरस्य सत्वेन तदाविष्टजीवोऽपि ब्राह्मणो भवेत् तदेव नास्ति कुतः। अन्नमयादन्नमयमिति-पांचभौतिकसाम्यात्। यद्युच्यते अवयवानामप्यवयव्यवच्छेदकावच्छिन्नत्वात् अंगुलमात्रेऽपि शरीरत्वव-दस्त्येव शरीरे ब्राह्मणत्वमिति। **तर्हि पावकोऽपि ब्राह्मणहा स्यात् ब्रह्महत्या च बंधूनां शरीरदहनाद् भवेदिति** चेन्न। शरीरदहनस्यांत्येष्ट्या-दिविधिप्राप्तत्वात्। अदहनेऽपि नाशस्यावश्यंभावित्वात्। अन्यथा नाशे तु पूतिगंधकृमिपतनादिबीभत्सत्वापत्तेः तन्निवारणोपकारकत्वात् ज्वलनतापजनित-पीड़ाभोक्तुर्जीवस्याप्यभावाच्च तत्कर्म दोषाय न भवति। न च जीवाभावादेव ब्राह्मणत्वं नास्तीति वाच्यम्। अंत्येष्ट्यादिश्रुत्युक्तकर्माभावापत्तेः। अत एव प्रागुक्तं कस्यचिदवयवस्य विकलत्वे विशेषनाममात्राधिक्यमिति। अतोऽत्रापि जीवाभावान्मृत-ब्राह्मण शरीरमिति। **यदुक्तं ब्राह्मणशरीरविनाशाच्च यजनादिषट्कर्मणां ब्राह्मणशरीरजनितानां फलस्य नाशः स्यादिति**। एतच्च भवन्मतं यथा-

भस्मीभूतस्य देहस्य पुनरागमनं कुतः।
तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन ऋणं कृत्वा घृतं पिबेदिति।।

न चैतदभिमतं लोकांतरे तत्फलानुभवस्य शास्त्रप्रसिद्धत्वात्। यथाह भगवान्

-त्रै विद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयंते।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकमश्नंति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगानिति।।

गीता, 9-20।।

1.3 अन्यच्च। यदि शरीरं ब्राह्मणः स्यात्तर्हि ब्राह्मणशरीरनिष्पंदजाताश्च क्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्रा अपि ब्राह्मणा स्युरिति। अत्र ब्राह्मणदम्पत्योः सुतस्यैव ब्राह्मणजातेर्गृहीतत्वात् ते ब्राह्मणा भवितुं नार्हन्ति। अनेनैव विदुरा इति लोके प्रसिद्धा ब्राह्मणजनिता दासीपुत्रास्तेषामपि निवृतिः। इति **शरीरमपि ब्राह्मणो न भवतीत्यस्योत्तरम्। एवं चेत्तर्हि ब्राह्मणाभावः प्राप्नोति। इदानींतनेषु ब्राह्मणेषु पितरि संदेहादिति** चेत्! भवान् प्राज्ञः अतोऽत्र भवत एव पितरि संदेहो नान्येषाम्। एवं मुधा सर्वत्र संदिहानस्य सुखोदर्कं न स्यात्। यथा।

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मन इति॥

4-40,गीता

अहो गोत्रब्राह्मणमारभ्य ब्राह्मणीनां शूद्रपर्यंतमभिगमनदर्शनात् संशयाभाव एवेति चेत् भवान् भल्लाक्षः पुरोभागीति भवानेवैतत्सदा पश्यति नान्ये। किंच। एतादृशकर्मणः कुत्राप्यभाव एवेति नास्माभिरुच्यते। यत्र साक्षात्प्रपश्यंति तत्र सद्य एव बहिष्कुर्वन्ति तत्रापि रजसा शुध्यते नारीति वचनात् गर्भधारणात्प्रागेवोत्त-माधमतारतम्येन निवृत्तेरवसरः परतस्तु नास्त्येव पुनरावृतिः। सगोत्रब्राह्मणाद् गर्भधारणेऽपि तत्र जातस्य कुंडत्वं न तु ब्राह्मणत्वम्। अमृते जारजः कुंड इति कोशोक्तेः। तदा अन्यत्किं वाच्यम्। अथ वृथा कथमुच्यते ब्राह्मणाभावः प्राप्नोतीति। भवादृशदुष्टप्रवादस्य त्वाप्तवाक्यत्वाभावात्तेन व्यवहारनिश्चयो भवितुं नार्हति। कुतः-

अपक्ववाचामधमाधमानां न सूक्तिगंधोऽपि गिरां प्रबंधो।
पिण्याकपण्यव्यवहारभूमौ कुरंगनाभेः कुत एव वार्ता॥

इत्यस्मात्। ननु यदा साक्षात्प्रपश्यंति तदा बहिष्कुर्वन्तु परंतु तत्पूर्वं दोषस्य ब्राह्मणत्व एव विद्यमानत्वात् कथं ब्राह्मणत्वस्य शुद्धत्वमिति चेत् मैवं वोचः। एतद्दोषस्याज्ञातस्थितिः परंतु भवच्छरीर-उदरकोष्टके मलोऽस्तीति भवता ज्ञातमेव तथाऽपि शरीरं न त्यजसि न वा अपवित्रं मन्यसे तस्मिन्नेव बहिः पतिते त्वतीवासह्यं मन्यसे दूरत एव त्यजसि चैवमेव तत्रापीति जानीहि।

सर्वारंभा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृता इत्युक्तेः॥ 18-48, गीता

न तु ब्राह्मणदंपत्योः सुतस्यैव ब्राह्मणजातेर्गृहीतत्वादित्युक्तम् एतदनुपपन्नं व्यभिचारदर्शनात्। उक्तं हि स्मृतौ हस्तिन्यामचलो जात इत्यारभ्य जातिस्तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवतीत्यंतस्योत्तरम्।

1.3 कपिलो देवहूत्यां जात इति पुराणे अत्र कपिलाजात इति लिखितम्। अगस्त्यः कुंभसंभव इति कोशे अत्रागस्तिपुष्पादिति। विश्वामित्रो गाधिराजसुत इति पुराणे अत्र चंडालीसुत इति। किं च। एकत्र कौशिकः कुशसंभव इति पुनः कौशिकं चैव शूद्रिकेति च। कौशिकस्तु विश्वामित्र एव। महेंद्रगुग्गुलूलूकव्यालग्राहिषु कौशिक इति नानार्थकोशे वर्त्तते परंतु ब्राह्मणेष्वेतेषां प्रयोजनाभाव एव। अत एवं विनिगमनाविरहात् कतमं सत्यं ज्ञेयम्। रेणुकाजनयद्रामामित्यत्रोक्तं रेणुका तु जमदग्नेर्भार्यैवात्र किमाश्चर्यमापतितम्। कैवर्तिन्यजनयद् व्यासमिति सत्यवत्या दाशराजपालत्वात् कैवर्त्तिनीतिनाम निश्चितं कैवर्त्ते दाशधीवराविति कोशोक्तेः।

वस्तुतस्तु वसुराजा मोघवीर्यान्मत्स्युदरे जाताऽतो मत्स्यगंधेत्यपि नाम सैव सत्यवत्यपि। अत एषा का वा स्मृतिरित्येतन्मूलं मृग्यम्। अस्तु नाम स्मृतिमूलविचारः व्यासवसिष्ठद्रोणाचार्यादयो ज्ञाताः प्रसिद्धा एव अत्रैकस्याप्युक्त्यनुसारेण वास्तवत्वे व्यभिचारो दुर्वार एवेत्यत उच्यते। तेषां तेजो विशेषेण प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते। अत एव ऋषीणां कुलं नदीनां मूलं न विचारयेदिति लौकिकी गाथाऽपि प्रसिद्धा। तथा च व्यासजन्म महाभारते आदिपर्वणि वंशावतरणे विस्तरतो द्रष्टव्यम्। अत्र किंचिल्लिख्यते–

इति सत्यवती दृष्टा लब्ध्वा वरमनुत्तमम्।
पराशरेण संयुक्ता सद्योगर्भं सुषावसा॥
जज्ञे च यमुनाद्वीपे पाराशर्यः सवीर्यवान्।
स मातरमनुज्ञाप्य तपस्येव मनो दधे॥
स्मृतोऽहं दर्शयिष्यामि कृत्येष्विति च सोऽब्रवीत्॥
एवं द्वैपायनो जज्ञे सत्यवत्यां पराशरादित्यादि॥

सांप्रतमप्येवं विधौ जन्यजनकौस्तश्चेद्योग्यौ भवतः। येषाममोघवीर्यम् अचेतनकुशघटादावपि न नश्यति। अतएव–

महात्मनां वचः सत्यं तथैवाचरितं क्वचित्।
तेषां यत्स्ववचो युक्तं बुद्धिमांस्तत्समाचरेदिति॥

आधुनिकानां वीर्यं तु क्षेत्रेऽपि नियतं न फलत्यल्पवीर्यत्वात्। अत एवं ब्राह्मणदंपत्योः सुत इति नियमः कृतः। पूर्वसामर्थ्यातिशयादेव द्वादशविधपुत्र-ग्रहणमासीत्। तदानीं क्षेत्रजापविद्धादीनां ब्राह्मणवीर्यजनिताजनितत्वज्ञानमासीत्तेन वर्णसंकरो नाभवत्। संप्रति भवेदिति भीत्येवौरसकृत्रिमावेव गृहीतौ। अत ऋषीणां जन्मप्रदर्शनेनास्य नियमस्य बाधो न भवेत्। कुतः। यथा सामान्यतः शास्त्रे चिरंदीनां सर्वत्र केशकृंतननिषेधेऽपि प्रयागे क्षेत्रबलात् विशेषशास्त्रेण विधिर्वर्त्तते। स तु तस्मिन्नेव क्षेत्रे युक्तः तमन्यत्र प्रवर्तयितुं कोऽपि न शक्नोति। अनेन सर्वत्र निषेधशास्त्रस्य बाधोऽपि नास्ति। यथा च पुरुषोत्तमक्षेत्रे नाम जगन्नाथक्षेत्रे शूद्रस्पृष्टस्यापि प्रसादान्नस्य भक्षणविधिर्वर्त्तते। एवमेव सर्वत्र कर्त्तुं न शक्यते विशेषविधानाभावात् दोषश्रवणाच्च। यथा –

शूद्रीहस्तेन यो भुंक्ते मासमेकं निरंतरम्।
जीवमानो भवेच्छूद्रो मृतः श्वानश्च जायते॥

इति मनुवचने विद्यमानेऽपि भगवदाज्ञया तत्र विधिरस्ति। फलश्रवणमपि।

यथा –

निवेदितस्यात्र रमासखाय नीचाहृतस्यापि किलौदनादेः।
भुक्ताशनं हंत भवार्जितानां महाहसां नाशनमामनंतीति।।

तथैवात्रापीति ध्येयम्। अहो माभूदनेन हेतुनाऽतिव्याप्तिव्यभिचार: परंतु अव्यातिव्यभिचारस्तु दृश्यते। कथमिति चेत्। ब्राह्मणदंपतिसुतेऽपि प्रथमं ब्राह्मणत्वं नास्ति जन्मतः शूद्रत्वात्।। यथाहु:-

जन्मना जायते शूद्रो व्रतबंधा द्विजो भवेत्।
वेदाभ्यासी भवेद्विप्रो ब्रह्मज्ञो ब्राह्मणो भवेत्।।

इति वचनादिति चेदुच्यते। अत्रेदं वचनं ज्ञानवद् ब्राह्मणस्तावकं न तु शूद्रत्वप्रापकं कौमारे कर्मकरणशक्तिर्नास्तीति तन्निषेधात् ब्राह्मणत्वव्यंजक-कर्मकरणाभावेन शूद्रकल्प इत्येवाशयो न तु सामान्यतः शूद्र इति। अतोऽव्यंजित-ब्राह्मणत्वव्याप्यशूद्रत्वम्। यथा पितृधने पुत्राणां जन्मत एव स्वत्वोत्पत्तावपि सति पितरि विभागात्प्राक् यथेच्छव्यये स्वातंत्र्याभावात् अव्यंजितमेव स्वत्वं तथाऽत्रापि संस्कारावधीतिज्ञेयम्। अन्यथा शूद्राविशेषे व्रतबंधाह द्विजो भवेदित्युक्ते शूद्रोऽपि व्रतबंधात् द्विजो भवेत् एतत्कदाऽपि न घटते। अस्तु नाम शूद्रत्वे विशेष: व्रतबंधसाम्यात् क्षत्रियवैश्यसाम्यं तु घटेतेति चेन्न। तत्रापि ब्राह्मणत्वव्याप्यद्विजत्वमेवान्यथाव्रतबंधविधेरविशेषः स्यात् तथा नास्ति ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियवैश्यानां क्रमात् पलाशपिप्पलौदुंबरदंडधारणं भवत्पूर्वभवन्मध्यभवदंत्याभिर्भिक्षायां चाभिवादने शर्मवर्मगुप्तोच्चारणाद्यनेकविधविधिविशेषदर्शनात्। एवम् वेदाभ्यासेऽप्यंत्ययोरध्यापनाधिकाराभावाद् विप्रत्वं नास्ति। ब्रह्मज्ञ इत्यत्र व्याप्यव्यापकसाम्येन सर्वात्मना ब्राह्मणत्वमित्यति श्रेष्ठ्यं प्रतिपादितम्। परन्तु जन्मत एव ब्राह्मणत्वं वर्त्तते।। एवं मानववचनोक्तशूद्रत्वमपि। यथाह मनु:-

सद्यः पतति मांसेन लाक्षया लवणेन च।
त्र्यहाच्छूद्रश्च भवति ब्राह्मण: क्षीरविक्रयीति।।

इदं वचनं विकर्मब्राह्मणनिंदकं न तु शूद्रत्वप्रापकम्। अत्र भवतैवोक्तं किं खलु दुष्टोप्यश्व: सूकरो भवेदिति। अतो यथालौकिके आजानेयाश्वस्य केनचित्संगत्यादिदोषेण पंचधारागत्यादिविकलत्वे अश्वो गर्दभो जात इत्युक्तिवत्। तत्र वस्तुतस्तु गर्दभो न जात: परंतु गुणहीनत्वात्साम्यमात्रम्। तथाऽत्रापि धर्मभ्रष्टत्वात् शूद्रसाम्यमात्रमेव न तु शूद्रत्वम्। अन्यथा प्रायश्चित्तादिनिष्कृतिर्न स्यात्। एवमेव सूर्यसोमादीनां पशुत्वकथनश्रुतेरभिप्रायोऽपि पशुत्वप्रतिपादको न भवति यथा सिंहो देवदत्त इत्यत्र देवदत्त: सटापुच्छचतुष्पादसहित इत्यभिप्रायो नास्ति किंतु सिंहतुल्य:

पराक्रमीति। तथा देवा अपि पुच्छविषाणसहिता इति न। ज्ञानेन हीनाः पशुभिः समाना इत्युक्ते: आदौ विशेषज्ञानहीनाः ततस्तपसा भगवदाराधनेन प्राप्तज्ञाना बहुज्ञा आसन्निति। अन्येषां किं वाच्यं सृष्टिकर्तुर्ब्रह्मणोप्येवमेव। ब्रह्मणोवृत्तं भागवते 2 स्कंधे 9 अध्याये द्रष्टव्यं सारांशस्तु भगवानेक एव सर्वज्ञः स्वतंत्रः अन्ये सर्वेऽपि परिमितज्ञा अस्वतंत्राश्च तद्भयेन तदाज्ञया चरन्तीति श्रुत्यर्थो भागवते 3 स्कंधे 29 अध्याये-

यद्भयाद्वाति वातोऽयं सूर्यस्तपति यद्भयात्।
यद्भयाद्वर्षते देवो भगणो भाति यद्भयादिति।।

3-29-40

एवं सूचनार्थः श्रुतेरभिप्रायः। अतो भागवते -

परोक्षवादो वेदोऽयं बालानामनुशासनम्।
कर्ममोक्षाय कर्मणि विधत्ते ह्यगदं यथेति।।

11-3-44

अत्रेदं तत्त्वमवगंतव्यम्। यत्र स्वल्पापराधस्यात्यनिष्टफलं श्रूयते तत्र तत्कर्माप्रवृत्यर्थं भयप्रदर्शनमेव। यथाऽल्पसुकृतस्य महत्फलं श्रवणं रोचनार्था फलश्रुतिरिति। न हि कुत्राप्युर्वारुकचोरं शूलमारोपयन्ति। न च दरिद्रतः कोपि धनप्राप्तिर्भवेत्। अतो यदुक्तं मानवे धर्मे -

अधीत्य चतुरो वेदान् सांगोपांगेन तत्वतः।
शूद्रा शूद्रात्प्रतिग्रहग्राही ब्राह्मणो जायते खरः।।
खरो द्वादशजन्मानि षष्टिजन्मानि सूकरः।
श्वानः सप्ततिजन्मानि इत्येवं मनुरब्रवीदिति।।

एतच्छूद्रप्रतिग्रहनिवर्तकाभिप्रायकमेव न तु खरत्वादिप्रापकम्। अन्यथा यथोक्तार्थस्यैव वास्तवपक्षे फलश्रुतेरपि वास्तवं स्यात्। तथासति एतन्निष्कृतिरपि सुलभैव। यथाऽध्यात्मरामायण आरंभाध्याये -

दुष्प्रतिग्रहदुर्भोज्यदुरालापादिसंभवम्
पापं सकृत्कीर्तनेन राम गीता विनाशयेदिति।।

एवं च संध्यावंदनभाष्ये आचमनविधौ -

गोकर्णाकृतिहस्तेन माषमग्नं जलं पिबेत्।
तन्न्यूनमधिकं वाऽपि सुरापानसमं भवेदिति।।

अत्र जलन्यूनाधिक्यमात्रेण महापातकांतर्गतसुरापानप्रापणम् आस्तिक्यबुद्धिना

कर्म कर्तव्यं नोचेदेवमिति भयदर्शनार्थमेव। तत्वं तु वैदिकनिघंटौ सुरेति जलनामापि वर्त्तते। अतो न्यूनाधिकत्वे जलपानसमं भवेत् न त्वाचमनविधिसिध्याप्रायत्यं स्यादिति। अत्राप्येतस्य वस्तुत्वे एतादृशफलश्रुतेरपि वस्तुत्वं स्यात्। यथा हरितालिकाव्रतकथायाम्–

एवं विधिं या कुरुते च नारी भर्त्रा समं सा रमते सुखेन।
विनाशकाले मम तुल्यरूपं सायुज्यमुक्तिं लभते सुखेन॥
अश्वमेधसहस्राणि वाजपेयशतानि च।
कथाश्रवणमात्रेण तत्पुण्यं लभते नर इति॥

अत्र ज्ञानं विना न कैवल्यमिति ज्ञानैकसाध्यस्य मोक्षस्य अर्थी समर्थो विद्वान् जातपुत्रः कृष्णकेशीत्येवं विधाधिकारिणा द्रव्यश्रमसाध्यस्य यज्ञफलस्य च प्राप्तिः व्रतानुष्ठानमात्रेण कथा श्रवणे च स्त्रिया उक्ता। एतद्वस्तुत्वे सर्वशास्त्रविरोधः स्यात्। अतो रोचनार्थमेव। तच्च भयप्रदर्शनार्थमेवेति सिद्धम्। एवमस्तीति दुष्कर्मण्यनिष्टफलं सत्कर्मणीष्टफलं सुतरां नास्तीति नास्माभिरुच्यते। किंतु। तत्तत्कर्मयोग्यफलाफलकल्पनमेवोचितमिति। अत उक्तमारंभे– धर्मस्य तत्वं निहितं गुहायामिति।।

यत्रत्वपराधानुरूपं दुष्टफलश्रवणं प्रायश्चित्तादिकं च तत्र वास्तवमेव ज्ञेयम्। यथा– गुरुतल्पगामी स वृषणं शिश्नं परीवास्यां जलावादाय दक्षिणां दिशमनावृत्तिं व्रजेदिति। किंच–

शूद्रीपरिवृतो विप्रः शूद्री च गृहमेधिनी।
वर्जितः पितृदेवेन रौरवं सोधिगच्छतीति।।

एवमादिस्थले यथोक्तार्थ एव ग्राह्यः। एवं चेदपि पातित्यसंपादकदोषे कृते तु पतित एव न ब्राह्मण इति प्रथममेव प्रतिपादितत्वान्नास्मन्मतविरोधः। एवं फलस्यापि। ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेंद्रलोकमश्नंति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् इत्यादिस्थले सकामविषयवस्तुत्वमेव बोध्यमिति।

१.४ मूलं॥ ज्ञानमपि ब्राह्मणो न भवतीत्यारभ्य न च ते ब्राह्मणाः स्युरित्यंतस्योत्तरम्।

ज्ञानं तावद् ब्राह्मणो न भवति शूद्रोऽपि न भवति परंतु ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतमिति भगवदुक्तेः ज्ञानी त्वत्युत्तमो भवेत् व्यासादयो ज्ञानबाहुल्यादेवोत्तमा अभवन् तर्हि ये ये ज्ञानवंतः शूद्रास्ते सर्व एव ब्राह्मणाः स्युः। दृश्यंते च क्वचित् शूद्रा अपि वेदादिसर्वविद्याविशारदाः ते सर्वे ब्राह्मणाः स्युरिति चेद् उच्यते। अत्र सांगवेदस्याधिकारिणा विधिवदधीतस्यैव सफलत्वात्। अधिकार्युपनयनसंस्कृतः। विधिस्तूपाकर्मणि वेदारंभं कृत्वा गुर्वनुज्ञयाऽध्ययनं कर्तव्यमिति। प्राप्ताधिकारस्यापि

गुर्वनुज्ञां विनाऽध्ययनकरणे दोष उक्तो मनुना-

ब्रह्म यस्त्वननुज्ञातमधीयानादवाप्नुयात्।
स ब्रह्मस्तेयसंयुक्तो नरकं प्रतिपद्यत इति।।

2-16, मनुस्मृति:

एवं सति विनाधिकार पठने किमदृष्टं स्यात् शूद्रस्य तु वेदश्रवणेऽपि जतुत्रपुभ्यां कर्णप्रपूरणमिति महत्प्रायश्चित्तमुक्तं पठनं दूरतोपास्तमेव। तस्मिन् वेदा अपि निर्वीया भवेयु:। यथाहु:-

दर्भाः पिंडेषु निर्माल्या विप्राः प्रेतान्नभोजने।
वेदाः शूद्रेषु निर्माल्या निर्माल्यश्चिति पावक इति।।

अत एवात्र सर्वत्र श्रुत्यर्थ एव लिखितो न तु साक्षात् श्रुति:। कुत:। वज्रसूचीं शूद्रादय एवोररीकुर्वंतीति तदवलोकनार्थमप्येतट्टंकलेखनमिति।। अस्तु वेदान्माभूत् शास्त्रादिना ज्ञानसिद्धिर्भवेदिति चेन्न। यथा भागवते-

शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातो न निष्णायात्परे यदि।
श्रमस्तस्य श्रमफलो ह्यधेनुमिव रक्षत इति।।

11-11-18।।

शास्त्रपठनात् घटपटादिसामान्यज्ञानं वादिजयकारकं भवेत् तेन व्यवहारविषये श्रेष्ठत्वं स्यात् परंतु भगवद्विषयकज्ञानं विना परमार्थविषये श्रेष्ठ्यं न स्यात्। यथाहु:-

त्वन्मायया कमलनाभ विमोहितस्य विद्यावतो जड़मतेरपि को विशेषः।।
गाढांधकारकवलीकृतलोचनानामुन्मीलनेन किमुताथ निमीलनेनेति।।

अतस्तत् ज्ञानं विलक्षणमेव। यथाह भगवान् -

नहि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते। 4-38।।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शांतिमचिरेणाधिगच्छतीति।। 4-39।।

एवंविधस्तु ब्रह्मविद् ब्राह्मणो भवेदित्युक्ते: ब्राह्मणोऽपि भवेत् परंतु तस्य स्थितिरेवम् -

नाहं मनुष्यो न च देवयक्षौ न ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्राः।।
न ब्रह्मचारी न गृही वनस्थो भिक्षुर्न चाहं निजबोधरूप इति।।

अत एव विधिनिषेधावपि न स्त इत्याह -

कार्याकार्ये किमपि सततं नैव कर्तृव्यमास्ते जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिमुपगतो दग्धवस्त्रावभासः।।

एवं देहे प्रविलयगते तिष्ठमानो विमुक्तो निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतः को विधिः को निषेध इति॥

नन्वयमेतादृश इति कथं ज्ञेयमिति चेत्।लक्षणैर्ज्ञेयमित्याह-

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगत स्पृहः।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यत इति॥

2-56॥

एतादृशस्थित्या सिद्धिलब्धशापानुग्रहसामर्थ्येन च ज्ञेयमिति। एवंस्थितेऽपि विद्वानेव हि जानाति विद्वज्जनपरिश्रममिति तन्मार्गप्रवृत्तैरेव ते ज्ञायंते न तु पामरैः दंभाभावात्। तेऽपि पामरजनसंसर्गनिवारणार्थमेव बालोन्मुत्तपिशाचवत् गूढचर्यया चरंति यथा -

अहिरिव जनसंगं सर्वदा वर्जयित्वा कुणपमिव सुनारीं चिंतयानो विरक्तः।

विषमिव विषयार्थान्मन्यमानो दुरंतान् जगति परमहंसो मुक्तिभावं समेतीति॥

परंतु भवादृशा दांभिका एव पामरान् स्थगयंति। यथा-

अपि वेत्ति षडक्षराणि चेदुपदेष्टुं शिति कंठमिच्छति॥
वसनाशनमात्रमस्तिचेद् धनदादप्यतिरिच्यते खल इति॥

किंच

सर्वे ब्रह्म वदिष्यंति संप्राप्ते तु कलौ युगे।
तन्निष्ठा नास्ति मैत्रेय शिश्नोदरपरायणाः॥

अतस्त्यागोप्युक्तः-

संसारविषयासक्तं ब्रह्मज्ञोस्मीति वा दिनम्।
कर्मब्रह्मोभयभ्रष्टं तं त्यजेदंत्यजं यथेति॥

१.५ मूलं॥ आचारोऽपि ब्राह्मणो न भवति। इत्याद्यस्योत्तरम्। आचारः प्रथमो धर्म इत्युक्तेः आचार सर्वावश्यक एव। तत्र च। आचारहीनं न पुनंति वेदा इति वचनात् द्विजानामत्यावश्यकः तैरपि देशकालात्माधिकार शक्त्यादिकं विचार्यैव कर्तव्यः। यथा-

अनाचारस्तु मालिन्यमत्याचारस्तु मूर्खता।
विचाराचारतात्पर्यं ज्ञात्वा सम्यक् सुखी भवेदिति॥

शूद्रस्य तु यथाधिकारमाचारः क्रियमाणः सच्छूद्र इति सच्छब्दप्रापकः न तु वर्णांतरसंपादकः। किं खलूद्वर्तितोऽपि रासभः सैंधवो भवेत्।

१.६ मूलं। कर्मापि ब्राह्मणो न भवतीत्याद्यस्योत्तरम्।।

कर्मापि यस्य यद्विहितं तदेव तस्य श्रेय:संपादकं नान्यदन्यस्य। यथा भगवान् -

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः।।
शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षांतिरार्जवमेव च।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्राह्मं कर्मस्वभावजम्।।
शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम्।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्मस्वभावजम्।।
कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्मस्वभावजम्।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम्।।
स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नर इति।।

18.41-45 ।।

एवं स्वकर्माभिरतस्यैव सिद्धेरुक्तत्वात्। अन्यथा सिद्धेरभावः प्रत्युत प्रत्यवायोऽपि। श्रीभगवान् -

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्।।18-47।।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावह इति।। 3-35।।

अत्र ब्राह्मणोऽसौ षट्कर्म यागादिभिर्वृत इति ब्राह्मणस्यैव यजनादिषट्कर्माण्युक्तान्यतः शूद्रस्य भयावहान्येव न तु तमवर्णप्रापकाणीति। ननु यथा शूद्रस्य षट्कर्माणि तथा ब्राह्मणस्यापि परधर्मत्वेन सेवाधर्मो भयावह एव बाढम्। अत एवायं धर्मः 'न श्ववृत्या कदाचनेति' ब्राह्मणवृत्तिविधौ निषिद्धः। श्ववृत्तिः नीचसेवनमिति। अहो तर्हि ब्राह्मणस्य वर्णोत्तमत्वात् स्ववर्णेतरसेवा नीचसेवेति स्थितम्। अत्र बहवो ब्राह्मणा राजसेवापरा दृश्यंते अत्र कथमिति चेत्। अत्र सेवाधर्म आपद्धर्मत्वेन गृहीत इति प्रबलदोषाय न भवति। अतो न वर्णत्वहानिः। आपदि त्वित्थं युगांतरे क्षत्रिया राजानः ते ब्राह्मणानुत्तमप्रकारेण पालयंत आसन्। ब्राह्मणा अपि निश्चिंततया स्वधर्मनिरता आसन् संप्रतिमुख्यक्षत्रियसार्वभौमाद्यभावात् यत्र कुत्र खंडमंडलाधिपाः शूद्रप्राया म्लेच्छादयोऽपि संति। तेऽपि राजानोऽपि न संति। संति च कलौ स्वेच्छाधनग्राहिण इत्येतादृशाः किं पालयंति। सेवया दीयते कलावित्युक्तेः सेवां विना वृत्तेरभावेनापदं ज्ञात्वा सेवाधर्मः स्वीकृतः। तत्र च ये निपुणास्त एवं कुर्वंति।

'अशुभपुषिकलावप्यप्रमत्ताः स्वधर्मादनुदिनमुपकारानाचरंतो बुधानाम्।'
'बहुजनपरिपुष्टौ बद्धदीक्षाः सदैते तनुसुखमपि हित्वा तन्वते राजसेवामिति।।'

एवं बहूपकारकत्वादेषां दोषो गतप्राय एव। अथ ये केवलं स्वकुक्षिभरणार्थमेव स्वधर्मं त्यक्त्वा वृत्तौ सत्यामपि राजसेवां कुर्वन्ति तेषां दोषो दुर्वार एवं। अत आहुः-

स्त्रियः कामेन नश्यंति ब्राह्मणा नृपसेवयेति॥

संकटे तु विधिरेव वर्त्तते -

वृद्धौ च मातापितरौ भार्या साध्वी सुतः शिशुः।
अप्यकार्यशतं कृत्वा भर्त्तव्या मनुरब्रवीदिति॥

१.७ मूलं॥ अथ वेदेनापि ब्राह्मणो न भवति। इत्याद्यस्योत्तरम्॥ अत्र वेदमूलमिदं ब्राह्म्यमित्युक्तेः ब्राह्मणस्य समस्तकर्मसु वेदमंत्रावश्यकत्वात् वेदेनैव ब्राह्मणो भवति। रावणो ब्राह्मण एव प्रत्युत आहिताग्निरपि। ब्राह्मणो नेत्युक्तिर्मोहादेवेति। यथाहाध्यात्मरामायणे रावणं प्रति शुकः-

अतस्त्वं ब्राह्मणो भूत्वा पौलस्त्यतनयोऽपि सन्।

युद्धकाण्ड, च.अ. 52

अज्ञानी व सदाभोगाननुधावसि किं मुधेति॥

युद्धकाण्ड, च.अ. 53

रावणवधानंतरमपि -

चित्यां निवेश्य विधिवत् पितृमेधविधानतः।
आहिताग्नेर्यथा कार्यं रावणस्य बिभीषणः॥

युद्धकाण्ड, द्वा.अ. 36

तथैव सर्वमकरोद् बंधुभिः सहमंत्रिभिरिति॥

युद्धकाण्ड, द्वा.अ. 37

तर्हि रामस्य ब्रह्महत्या जातेति चेन्न।

आततायिनमायांतमपि वेदांतपारगम्
जिघांसंतं जिघांसीयान्न तेन ब्रह्महा भवेदित्युक्तेः॥

रावणस्य दारहरणशस्त्रपाणित्वेन प्रबलाततायित्वात्। तथाऽपि। हंतव्यो ब्राह्मणो नहीति श्रुत्यर्थपर्यालोचनेन पापमधिकं मत्वा तन्निष्कृत्यर्थं सेतुबंधसंनिधौ रामेश्वरस्थापनं कृतवान् रामः। अत एव तद्दर्शनेनाकस्मिकब्रह्महत्यापापनिवृत्तिरुक्ता पराशरेण। ब्रह्मघ्ने सेतुदर्शनमिति। एवं चेत् रामो मनुष्य इति निश्चितं भवेदिति चेन्न। कुतः। उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोकान कुर्यांकर्म चेदहमिति लोकसंग्रहार्थकृतमिति ज्ञेयम्। अतः-

रामो नारायणः साक्षाद्रावणो ब्राह्मणो मत इति॥

एवं स्थितेऽपि भवता ब्राह्मणत्वं न शास्त्रेणेत्यादिना सर्वथैव निराकृतम्।

पुनश्च। कुंदेंदुधवलं हि ब्राह्मणत्वं नाम सर्वपापापाकरणमिति स्वरूपमुक्तम्। एतेन ब्राह्मणत्वं नामैकमुत्तममस्तीति निश्चितम् अथ तस्य लक्षणविचार: कार्य:। भवता चात्र व्रततपोनियमेत्यारभ्य तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुरित्यंतेन लक्षणमुक्तं क्षांत्यादिभिर्गुणैर्युक्त इत्यादिवैशंपायनवचनैरपि। एतत्सर्वमपि वचनजातं सुगुणस्तावकं न तु ब्राह्मणत्वलक्षणप्रतिपादकं व्यभिचारदर्शनात्। स्तावकं च यथाभक्तयुत्कर्षवर्णने भागवते-

विप्राद् द्विषड्गुणयुतादरविंदनाभपादारविंदविमुखात् श्वपंचवरिष्ठं मन्ये इत्यादिना।

तृतीयस्कंधे 33 अधयायेऽपि -

यन्नामधेयस्मरणानुकीर्तनाद् यत्प्रह्वणाद्यत्स्मरणादपि क्वचित्।
श्वादोपि सद्यः सवनाय कल्पते कुतःपुनस्ते भगवन्नु दर्शनादिति। ॥
3 33.6॥

टीकायां श्रीधरस्वामी-सवनाय सोमयागाय कल्पते योग्यो भवति। अनेन पूज्यत्वं लक्ष्यत इति। एवं-चंडालोऽपि हि वृत्तस्थस्तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुरित्यत्र।।

अपि शब्दस्वरसात् क्षांत्यादिगुणानामुत्कर्षप्रतिपादन एव वचनाभिप्रायो न तु चंडालस्य ब्राह्मणत्वप्रतिपादने। यथा-अपि वा मातरं गच्छेन्न तु गंगाप्रतिग्रहमित्यत्रा-पिशब्दस्वरसादेव गंगाप्रतिग्रहस्यात्यंतगर्हणं दर्शितं न तु विधिलिङ: प्रयोगेऽपि मातृगमनविधिर्दर्शित: अनर्थापत्ते:। एवमत्रापीति ध्येयम्। अथवा। चंडस्त्वत्यंतकोपन इति कोशोक्ते: अलंपर्याप्तं चंड: चंडाल इति व्युत्पत्या दीर्घात्यंतकोपनोपीति। अत एव भृगुदुर्वासा जमदग्न्यादयोऽपि ब्राह्मणा इति। **अन्यच्च। देवमानुषनारीणा-मित्यादिना सुतरां मैथुनत्यागस्यैव ब्रह्मलक्षणत्वमुक्तम्।** एतस्यैव वस्तुत्वे ब्राह्मणस्य विवाहविधिरेव न स्यात्। तथासति यज्ञादीनां निवृत्ति:। तथा ऋणत्रयानिवृत्ति: ब्राह्मणाभावश्चेत्यनेकानर्थापत्ति: स्यात्। अतो मैथुनत्यागो धर्मपत्नीतरस्त्रीविषय एव। धर्मपत्नीगमनं तु विधिप्राप्तं धर्म्यम्। अत एव भगवान् -

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोस्मि भरतर्षभेति॥ 7-11, गीता

तस्मात्सुतरां मैथुनत्यागोक्तिर्निरर्थकैवेति।

किंच। तमहं ब्राह्मणं ब्रूयां शेषाः शूद्रा युधिष्ठिरेतिवचनं तु।

यथा। सर्ववर्णेषु ते शूद्रा ये ह्यभक्ता जनार्दन - इत्यत्र सर्ववर्णेष्वित्यनेनैव पृथक्निर्देशात्। शुचा द्रवंतीति शूद्रा इति व्याख्यानौचित्यं तथैवेदमपि व्याख्येयम्। अन्यथा स प्रोक्तो ब्राह्मणब्रुवा इत्यादिवचनानामानर्थक्यं स्यात्। अपि च। शूद्रोऽपि शीलसंपन्न इत्यादिपंचेंद्रियार्णवं घोरमित्यादि श्लोकद्वयमपि स्तावकमेव। कुत: -

'दु:शीलोपि द्विजः पूज्यो न तु शूद्रो जितेंद्रियः।' 'कः परित्यज्य गां दुष्टां दुह्याच्छीलवतीं खरीमितिन्यायोपबृंहितवचनविरोधात्॥'

एवमेव सदाचारदर्शनाच्चेति।। अथ पूर्वं व्यभिचारदर्शनादित्युक्तं कथं तदित्यपेक्षायामाह। पूर्वोक्तगुणप्रशंसावचनजातस्य ब्राह्मणत्वलक्षणत्वे यत्रैते गुणाः संति तत्रैव ब्राह्मणत्वं यत्र न संति तत्र ब्राह्मणत्वं नास्तीति वक्तव्यम्। एवं चेत् इंद्रियनिग्रहाद्युक्तसर्वगुणा विदुरे आसन् परंतु स ब्राह्मणो न जातः शूद्र एवासीत्। तत्रैव श्रेष्ठत्वमात्रम्। एवमपि न नियतत्वं त एव गुणा भीष्मेऽप्यासन् स तु क्षत्रिय एव। एतादृशगुणवानेव श्रावणो यो मृगयायां रात्रावजानता राज्ञा दशरथेन हतः स तु वैश्य एव। तस्य वैश्यत्वं कथं ज्ञातमिति चेत् तस्यैव वचनेन। तथा चाध्यात्मरामायणे दशरथः -

तदो मामाह स मुनिर्मा भैषीर्नृपसत्तम।

ब्रह्महत्या स्पृशेन्न त्वां वैश्योऽहं तपसि स्थित इति॥ अनेन-तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणमित्युक्तिर्व्यभिचरिता॥ अथ एतद्विपरीतगुणा रावणे आसन्। यथाह रावणवधानंतरं रामं प्रति विभीषणः-

नृशंसमनृतं क्रूरं त्यक्तधर्मव्रतं प्रभो।

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नार्होस्मि देवसंस्कर्तुं परदाराभिमर्शिनमिति॥

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स तु ब्राह्मण एवेति प्रागेव प्रतिपादितं न तु चंडालः। अत्र राक्षसत्वमप्यागतं परंतु वाल्मीकिरपि पूर्वमेतादृश एवासीत् यथाह रामं प्रति वाल्मीकिः -

अहं पुरा किरातेषु किरातैः सह वर्धितः।
जन्ममात्र द्विजत्वं मे शूद्राचाररतः सदा॥
शूद्रायां बहवः पुत्रा उत्पन्ना मे ऽजितात्मनः।
ततश्चौरैश्च संगम्य चौरोऽहमभवं पुरा॥
धनुर्बाणधरो नित्यं जीवानामंतकोपम इति॥

एवंविधोऽपि सप्तर्षिप्रसादाद् ऋषिर्जातः। एतेन ब्राह्मणः केनचिदंतरायेण कदाचित्कर्महीनश्चेदपि तस्य ब्राह्मणत्वं न नश्यति किंतु मलिनं भवति पुनश्च तपसा पुटपाकशोधितसुवर्णवत्तेजस्वी भवेदिति ज्ञापितम्। एवं विदुरादिषु तद्गुणसत्वेऽपि ब्राह्मणत्वाभावः रावणादिषु गुणाभावेऽपि ब्राह्मणत्वसत्वमिति अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां व्यभिचारः स्पष्ट एव अतो नैतल्लक्षणमुचितमिति। तर्हि ब्राह्मणस्य किं वा लक्षणमित्युक्ते यजनयाजनाध्ययनाध्यापनदानप्रतिग्रहाख्यषट्कर्माधिकारित्वमेव ब्राह्मणस्य

लक्षणमिति। अधिकारित्वमात्रकथनेनानाहिताग्न्यादौ नाव्याप्तिः। तेन विनाकरणात्परभूसंज्ञादौ नातिव्याप्तिः। परधर्मत्वेन फलव्यभिचाराच्च। अनुत्पन्नाधिकारिणि मृते उत्पन्नविनष्टघटलक्षणमत्राप्यनुसंधेयम्। अनेन यत्राधिकारित्वं तत्र ब्राह्मणत्वं यत्राधिकारित्वं नास्ति तत्र ब्राह्मणत्वमपि नास्तीति लक्षणसमन्वयो जायते। ननु। अनाहिताग्न्यादौ कर्माकरणेऽप्यधिकारित्वं परभूसंज्ञादौ कर्मकरणेऽप्यनधिकारित्वं कथं ज्ञेयमिति चेत् लोकप्रसिद्धयैव। तर्हि लोकप्रसिद्धिः अब्दल्कादरनामके यवने गाणपत्यो ब्राह्मण इत्यासीत् तत्रातिव्याप्तिरिति चेदुच्यते। कूटकार्षापणादिव्यवहारस्य तद्वास्तवाज्ञानकाले एकदेशे सत्यत्वाभासेन प्रतीयमानत्वेऽपि तज्ज्ञेन ज्ञाते स दंडं पुनर्यथा योग्यव्यवहारे स्थापनं क्रियत एव। एवमत्रापि परिणामे शिक्षादिदर्शनं जातमेवातः सार्वजनीनप्रसिध्याऽधिकारित्वज्ञानेन दोषावकाश इति। यजनादीनां विवरणं बृहट्टंके द्रष्टव्यम्। यजनाद्युक्तसमग्रस्यैकेन केनापि कर्तुमशक्यत्वादेवाधिकरित्वमात्रकथनम्। ननु।

यस्य वेदश्च वेदी च विच्छिद्येते त्रिपुरुषम्।
स वै दुर्ब्राह्मणो नाम सर्वकर्मबहिष्कृत इति।।

कर्माकरणे दौर्ब्राह्मण्यमुक्तं कथमधिकारित्वमात्रेण सिद्धिरिति चेन्मैवम्। एतद्वचनस्य निंदाश्रवणेन तत्कर्म प्रवर्त्तकाभिप्रायत्वात्। अन्यथा बहुधा ब्राह्मणाभाव एव स्यात। भवतु किमर्थं पोषणं क्रियत इति चेत् श्रुतिविरोधश्च। तथा च श्रुत्यर्थः-

ब्राह्मणस्यैष महिमा नित्यो नो क्षीयते क्वचित्।
वर्धते कर्मणा चैव तस्माद् ब्राह्मण उत्तम इति।।

एवमपि सर्वमेव न त्याज्यम्। यजने अकरणान्मंदकरणम्। अध्ययने यावदध्ययनं यत्किंचिद् वा। दानं च विभवानुसारतः। अन्यथा निंदाप्राप्तिः न तु ब्राह्मणत्वहानिः परंतु कर्मकरणमंदकरणाकरणैरुत्तममध्यमाधमत्वं स्यात्। अत एव ब्राह्मणेष्वप्यनेकभेदा जाताः। अत्र सर्वानपि कथयितुमशक्यत्वात्कांश्चिद् दर्शयामः। मुख्यस्तु वेदचतुष्टयतः शाखाचतुष्टयात्मकः समान एव। अस्मिन्नेव देशादिनामतः न्यूनाधिक्यभेदा जाताः यथा -

आंध्राः कर्णाटकाश्चैव गुर्जरा द्रविडास्तथा।
महाराष्ट्रा इति ख्याताः पंचैते द्रविडाः स्मृताः।।
सारस्वताः कानकुब्जा गौडा उत्कलमैथिलाः।
गौडा इति समाख्याताः पंचैते मुनिसत्तमैरिति।।

ननु कानकुब्जा उत्कला मांसमत्स्यभक्षणं कुर्वन्ति तत्तु आकाशगामिनो विप्राः पतंते मांसभक्षणादिति निषिद्धम्। अत एते कथं ब्राह्मणा इति चेत्। उच्यते।

एवं सामान्यतो निषिद्धेऽपि युगांतरे विशेषविधिरासीत्। यथा -

शशश्च शल्लकी गोधाकूर्मः खड्गश्च पंचमः।
पंच पंचनखा भक्ष्या मांसभक्षी न दोषभाक् ॥

इत्यादिना मांसभक्षणे। जातिभेदेन मत्स्यभक्षणेऽपि। तथा पाठीनराजीव-शल्यकाश्चद्विजातिभिः। सिंहास्परोहितावाद्यौ नियुक्तौ हव्यकव्ययोरिति। एतत्कलौ निषिद्धं तैर्नादृतम्। एवमांध्राद्या मातुलकन्यापरिणयं कुर्वन्ति तदप्यनुचितमेव भाति। कुतः यथा पितृव्यकन्या भगिनी तथा मातुलकन्याऽपि स्वसारं मातरं विनेति सापिंड्यनिर्णये निषिद्धम् अत्र कथमिति चेदुच्यते। एतन्निर्णयो गाणेशे भारततात्पर्ये

'भ्रातृष्वस्रोः सुतौ भ्रातृष्वसारौ यदि शौनक।'
'सप्तमादूर्ध्वमप्येष संबंधश्छिद्यतां कथम्।।'
'तस्मात्तयोः स्वसृभ्रातृभावो भाक्तो विगोत्रयोः।'
'दांपत्यभावस्तु तयोर्मंत्रलिंगात्परिस्फुटः।।'
'योषापत्यं मातुलीयं यथाभागः पितृष्वसुः।।'
'पुत्रस्यैवं वपातेऽमुंजुषस्वेन्द्रेत्यृषिर्जगौ इति।।'

अतो मातुलकन्यायां भगिनीत्वकथनं मोहादेवेति प्रतिभाति दांपत्यभावस्तु श्रुतिसिद्ध इति। एवंस्थितेऽपि वाजसनेय्यादिशाखांतरेषु निषेधपर्यवसानं दृश्यते तेषामृषिसंमतं तथैवेत्यत उक्तं तथा मुनीनां मतयश्च भिन्ना इति। किंच। महाराष्ट्राद्या दासीगमनं कुर्वन्ति तच्च। शूद्रीपरिवृतो विप्रः शूद्री च गृहमेधिनीत्यादिना निंदितमेतत्कथमिति चेत्। युगांतरे वर्णचतुष्टयदारग्रहणं ब्राह्मणस्यासीत् कलौ निषिद्धं तैर्नादृतम्। एवं चर्मद्रोणिस्थोदकपानमपीत्येतत्सर्वं देशानामाचारेण व्यवस्थितम्। यथाहुः-

उदूह्यते दाक्षिणात्यैर्मातुलस्य सुता द्विजैः।
दासीसंगो मध्यदेश उदड.मांसस्य भक्षणम्।।
मत्स्यादाश्च नराः पूर्वे व्यभिचाररताः स्त्रियः।
पश्चिमे वाडवाश्चर्मद्रोणिस्थजलपायिनः।।
अनेन कर्मणा नैते प्रायश्चित्तदमार्हका इति।।

अतो निंदाऽपि न कार्येत्याह पराशरः-

युगे युगे च ये धर्मास्तत्र तत्र च ये द्विजाः।
तेषां निंदा न कर्तव्या युगरूपा हि ते द्विजा इति।।

१.८ मूलं।। अन्यच्च भवतोक्तं इह शूद्राणां प्रव्रज्या न विधीयत इत्यारभ्य ब्राह्मणशुश्रूषैव तेषां धर्मो न भवतीत्यंतस्योत्तरम्।।

शूद्राणां नीचत्वं तु पद्भ्यामुत्पन्नत्वेन श्रुत्यैवाभिहितम्। एतदेव मुख्यहेतुः एनं पुरस्कृत्यानुवादकत्वेन चतुर्षु वर्णेष्वंतेवचनादित्यादिरपि संगच्छते। अत्रेदं तत्वम्। यत्र पाठक्रमवदेवार्थक्रमस्तत्रमुख्यत्वमेव। यत्र पाठक्रमे बाधस्तत्रार्थक्रमे बाधः। श्वयुवमघोनामित्यत्र पाठक्रमे गृहीते इंद्रस्य नीचत्वं स्यात् तथासति योग्यताविरहः, तेन च वाक्याप्रमाण्यप्रसंग इति तत्रार्थक्रम एव ग्राह्यः। ब्रह्मक्षत्रविट्शूद्रा इत्यत्र मुख्यत्वमेवेति। तर्हि गंगाऽपि भगवत्पदोत्पन्नत्वादेव भगवत्पदीत्युच्यते अतः साऽपि नीचा स्यादिति चेन्न। एकांगोत्पन्नत्वेऽपि संतत्युच्चरयोरिव गंगाशूद्रयोरप्युपादेयहेयत्वेन मुख्यनीचत्वस्य प्रसिद्धत्वात्। अपि च। स्त्रीशूद्रद्विजवधूनां त्रयी न श्रुतिगोचरेतिभागवतप्रथमस्कंधे सूतोक्तेः वेदानधिकारादेव प्रव्रज्याऽनधिकार इति। भवत्प्रतिज्ञा तु वेदाः प्रमाणं स्मृतयः प्रमाणमित्यादिना। एवमपि स्थिते शुश्रूषाविषये परिचर्यात्मकं कर्मशूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजमिति भगवद्वचने जाग्रत्यपि कथं नेति ब्रूते। विना वचनप्रमाणमेव प्रवज्या कथं विधीयते। अत एवमसदाग्रहेण भवान् शूद्रपरिव्राजक इति तर्क्यते।

१.९ मूलं। किंचाप्यन्यद् भवदीयमतं मुखतो ब्राह्मणा जाता इत्यारभ्य तेषामपि ब्राह्मणसंज्ञा क्रियत इत्यंतस्योतरम्॥

'आबद्धकृमिमसदाजटिलां सभितिरारोपितो मृगपतेः पदवीं यदिश्वा। 'मत्तेभकुंभतटपाटनलं पटस्य नादं करिष्यति कथं हरिणाधिपस्य॥' एवमेव संस्कारैः शूद्राणां ब्राह्मणत्वमिति॥ **मूलं। एकवर्णो नास्ति चातुर्वर्ण्यमित्यारभ्यैवं ब्राह्मणादीनां कथं चातुर्वर्ण्यमित्यंतस्योत्तरम्॥**

यद्येकस्माज्जाताः सर्वे समाना एवेति चेद् भवन्मतं तर्हि पशुपक्षिमृगादीनामपि भगवत एवोत्पन्नत्वात् हंसाः काका कृष्णसाराः श्वानः अश्वा गर्दभा इत्यादिषूत्तमाधमत्वं न स्यात् तेन भवतः अश्ववाहनवद् गर्दभयानमपीष्टं स्यात् तत्तु लोकेऽत्यंतं निंद्यम्। यथा–

बालगखित्वमकारणहास्यं स्त्रीषु विवादमसज्जनसेवा।
दर्भयानमसंस्कृतवाणी षट्सु नरो लघुतामुपयातीति॥
अहो किमेवमुच्यते॥

१.१० मूलं। इह हि गोहस्त्यश्वेत्यारभ्यैक एव वर्णो भवतीत्यंतस्योत्तरम्॥

अत्र राजतद्वाहनयोर्मनुष्यत्वाश्वत्वद् भेदाभावेऽपि राजतद्भृत्ययोः सेव्यसेवकभावेन मुख्यनीचत्वभेदो यथालोकप्रसिद्धः तथाऽत्रापि अभिवादनाशीर्वादकर्तृत्वेन भेदव्यवहारदर्शनात्। ननु। अभिवादनशास्त्रे –

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणा ह्युत्क्रांतियून स्थविर आगते।
प्रत्युत्थानाभिवादाभ्यां पुनस्तान्प्रतिपद्यत इति॥

म0स्मृ0,2.120

वयोविशेषस्यैवोक्तत्वात् कथं ब्राह्मण एवभिवाद्य इत्युच्यत इति चेत्। ज्येष्ठत्वं च ब्राह्मण एवोक्तं यथा मनुः -

ब्राह्मणं दशवर्षं तु शतवर्षं तु भूमिपम्।
पितापुत्रौ विजानीयाद् ब्राह्मणस्तु तयोः पितेति॥

म0स्मृ0,2.135,

अतएव भोजराजः -

उच्चैर्गतिर्जगति सिध्यति धर्मतश्चेत्तस्य प्रमा च वचनैः कृतकेतरैश्चेत्। तेषां प्रकाशनदशाऽपि महीसुरैश्चेत्तानंतरेण निपतेत् क्व नु मत्प्रणाम इति॥
अत एव महाजनो येन गतः स पंथा इत्युक्तम्॥

१.११मूलम्। इदं चावगम्यतां यथैकवृक्षोत्पन्नानामित्यारभ्यैक-पुरुषोत्पन्नत्वादित्यंतस्योतरम्॥

अत्र यथा वृक्षस्य बुधनाच्छिखरपर्यंतसमानत्वं तथा पुरुषावयवानामपि नोत्तमाधमत्वमतो मुखात्पादपर्यंतमुत्पन्नानां समानत्वमिति। अवयवसाम्यं प्रतिपादितम्। एवं चेत् यथाशिरसि करधारणेन प्रसादबोधात्संतोषो भवति तथा पादधारणेनापि भवेत्। एवं क्वचित् कस्यापि न भवति। अन्येषां भेदबुद्धीनां न भवतु भवान् समबुद्धिः भवतो भवेत्। अतः पादत्राणं शिरसि धृत्वा शिरस्त्राणं पादे कृत्वा सभायां सन्मानं लभते चेत् भवदुक्तिर्भवत्कृते सत्येत्यंगीकुर्मः। एवं कर्त्तुं भवानपि न शक्नोति तदा मनस्यन्यद्वचस्यन्यत्कार्यमन्यद्दुरात्मनामिति दोष आपतत्। अतः स्वोक्तिनिर्वाहार्थं निरपत्रपः सन् यद्यपि करोति भवान् तथाऽपि सभासदो न सभ्यं मन्येरन् प्रत्युत छकारेकारथकारोकारसंयोगोच्चारणेन न्यक्कुर्वीरन्। अतो वैदिकलौकिकविरुद्धं कथं जल्पति। तथा च मनुः -

ऊर्ध्वं नाभेर्मध्यतरः पुरुष परिकीर्तितः॥
तस्मान्मेध्यतमं त्वस्य मुखमुक्तं स्वयंभुवेति॥

म0स्मृ0,1.92

तस्माद ब्राह्मणस्य श्रैष्ठ्यमव्याहतमेवेति॥

१.१२ मूलम्। अन्यच्च दूषणं भवति यदि मुखतो जातो ब्राह्मण्याः कुत उत्पत्तिरित्यारभ्यानियतं ब्राह्मण्यमित्यंतस्योत्तरम्॥ अनयाोक्तया स्वयोग्यतां प्रकटीकृतवान् यथाह माघः-

सहजांधदृशः स्वदुर्नये परदोषेक्षणदिव्यचक्षुषः।

स्वगुणोच्चगिरो मुनिव्रता:परवर्णग्रहणेष्वसाधव इति।।

अहो अत्र मद्दुर्नय: कोवेति चेत् श्रृणु। शूद्रा कुत उत्पन्ना। भवन्मते पृथगवयवांगीकाराभावेऽपि एकस्मादुत्पन्नत्वादेवैकैवजातिरिति भवत्संमतमेव। अत: शूद्राया अपि तस्मादेवोत्पन्नत्वात् भवादृशानामपि दुर्निवार्य एव भगिनीप्रसंग:। अथ यदि मन्यसे अनभिहितप्रव्रज्याग्रहणात् गुप्तसंगेन तद्दोषान्मुक्त इति। हंत तर्हि भवत्पिता तेन दोषेण विना भवंतं कथमुत्पादितवान्। अतस्त्वत्पिताभगिनीगामीत्वं शुद्ध: किं। नहि लोके यत्र कुत्रापि पतितपुत्र: शुचिर्दृष्ट:। एतत्सर्वमविचार्यैव दोषोद्घाटनं हास्यास्पदमेव। यथाहु:-

यदशेषविलक्षणार्थवादैरविवादार्थममुं विकल्प्य तर्कै:।
परिदूषयितुं प्रवृत्तमात्र: परिहासास्पदतामुपैति लोके।।इति।

१.१३ मूलं।। सर्वे वै योनिजा मर्त्या इत्याद्यस्योत्तरम्।। एतद्वचनमसम्बद्धमेवलक्ष्यते। अगस्त्योगस्तिपुष्पाच्चेत्यादिना स्वपूर्वोदाहृतवचनविरोधात्। द्रोणाचार्यादीनाम् अयोनिजत्वं पुराणादिषु सर्वत्र प्रसिद्धमत एतद्वचनं हेयमेवेति।।

१.१४ मूलं।। एक वर्णमिदं पूर्वं विश्वमासीद् युधिष्ठिरेत्यादि वैशंपायनवचनस्योत्तरम्।।

एतद्वचनस्यापि पूर्ववचनसाहचर्यमेव प्रतिभाति। श्रुतिविरोधात्। तथा च श्रुत्यर्थ:-

धाता यथापूर्वमेवाकल्पयज्जगदादित:।
अनीदृशं जगत्क्वापि न कदाचिद् भवेदिदमिति।।

स्मृतिश्च मनु:-

सर्वेषां तु सनामानि कर्माणि च पृथक् पृथक।
वेदशब्देभ्य एवादौ पृथक्संस्थाश्च निर्मम इति।।

म0स्मृ0,1.21

शारीरकसूत्रं च-**शब्द इति चेन्नात:प्रभवात्प्रत्यक्षानुमानाभ्यामिति।।** एवं सर्वत्र वेदशब्दत एव जगदुत्पतिरुक्ता। वेदेऽपि मुखतो ब्राह्मणो जात इत्याद्यर्थो दर्शित:। भगवताऽपि। चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागश इत्युक्तमत: सृष्ट्यादित एव वर्णव्यवस्थेति सिद्धम्। अन्यथा वेदानामप्यादिमत्वप्रसंग: तेन तेषामपि पौरुषेयत्वेन प्रमाणानर्हत्वम्। तथासति तदनुगतस्मृत्यादीनामप्यप्रामाण्यमेव। ततो वेदा: प्रमाणं स्मृतय: प्रमाणमित्यादिनोक्तभवत्प्रतिज्ञाभंगश्चेत्यनेकानर्थापत्ति: स्यात्। अत एतद्वचनमपि हेयमेवेति निष्कर्ष:। ननु यदि भगवता प्रथमत एव चातुर्वर्ण्यं विहितं तर्हि सर्वत्र किमिति न कृतम्। वर्णव्यवस्थितिरिहैव कुमारिकाख्ये इति। इह भारतवर्ष एव कौमारिकाखंडे वर्णव्यवस्थिति: किमर्थं कृतेति चेत् उच्यते। अस्यैव

कर्मभूमित्वात् गुणकर्मविभागश एव वर्णविधानात्। भरतवर्ष च। तुषाराद्रेर्लंकावधिभरतवर्ष निगदितमिति। हिमालयतः लंकावधिः। अत्रैवाहोरात्रस्यात्यंतवृद्धिक्षयाभावात्। अतिशीताभावाच्च प्रातःशीतोदकस्नानसंध्याहोमादिकर्म योग्यत्वात्कर्मभूमित्वम्। परतस्तु शीताधिक्येनोदकं घनीभूत जायते तत्र शौचविधिरेव कर्त्तुमशक्यः स्नानादिकं तु दूरत एव। यथोक्तं-

यदत्र जागर्ति शिलासमं हिमं सुशीतला गंधवहाश्च दुःसहाः।
जलावगाहाच्च कितो नरो यतः कुतस्त्वनुष्ठास्यति कर्मनिर्मलमिति।।

अन्यच्च ज्योतिः सिद्धांतशिरोमणौ -

लंबाधिका क्रांतिरुदकचयावत्तावद्दिनं संततमेव तत्र इत्येव।

इत्येवं अक्षांशलंबांशसंक्रांतिवशाद्यत्र यत्रात्रत्यपक्षमासद्विमासकालावध्येकमेव दिनं भवेत् तत्रस्नानसंध्यादिकर्मणोतिकालविलंबेनानुपपतिः। सायं प्रातर्द्विजातीनामशनं श्रुतिचोदितमिति दिवाभोजनद्वयनिषेधात् तावतिदिवसे भोजनद्वयाभावे सति प्राणधारणमेव न स्यादिति परमकारुणिकेन भगवता लोकसौख्यार्थमेवैवं कृतमिति ज्ञेयम्। इतरवर्षेषु च शेषेषु चांत्यजजना निवसंति सर्वे इति एकैवजातिर्विहिता। तत्रत्यानां कर्मकरणाशक्यत्वेऽपि तदितरसदाचरणेनैव कृतार्थता सिध्यर्थ भगवता तेष्वेवावतारं धृत्वा तद्भाषयैव सेश्वरं शास्त्रं विहितम्। यथाऽस्मच्छास्त्रेऽपि -

परापवादे ये मूकाः परस्त्रीषु नपुंसकाः।
परद्रव्येषु ये चांधास्तेषां गंगा पदे पदे इति।।

तस्माद्वर्णव्यवस्थितिरादित एवास्ति।। अस्तु वा पूर्व कथमपि तथैवाधुनाप्याचार सर्वत्र न संभवति। यद्युच्यतेऽस्माभिस्तथैव आचरिष्यत इति। अत्र भवताऽपि म्लेच्छादिकैः सह भोजनं कर्त्तुं न शक्यते। तुरुष्कहूणाश्च सर्वैः सह भोक्तुं शक्नुवन्ति परंतु तेऽपि विवाहे सोदरभागिनीं किमिति त्यजन्ति। सृष्ट्यादौ तु एकस्यैव शरीरात् स्त्रीपुरुषावुत्पन्नौ तन्मिथुनात्सर्वे जाताः। यथा मनुसंहितायाम् -

द्विधा कृत्वात्मनो देहधर्मेन पुरुषोऽभवत्।
अर्धेन नारी तस्यां स विराजमसृजत्प्रभुरिति।।

म0स्मृ0,1.32

अतएव न देवचरितं चरेदित्युक्तं चरितं तु शास्त्रोक्तं चरेत्। यथाह भगवान्-

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थिताविति।।

गीता,16.24।।

शास्तीति शास्त्रं विधिरूपं वेदः स एव प्रमाणम्। ब्राह्मणविषये श्रुत्यर्थः-

यावंत्यो देवता लोके ताः सर्वा ब्राह्मणे स्थिताः।
तस्माद् ब्राह्मणवर्येभ्यो वेदविद्भ्यस्तु दर्शने॥
दर्शने नमनं कुर्यान्नाप्रीतिं कीर्तयेत्क्वदा।
एवंकृद्देवता एताः प्रीणात्येव न संशय इति॥

स्मृतिश्चमनुः -

उत्तमांगोद्भवाज्ज्यैष्ठ्याद् ब्रह्मणश्चैव धारणात्।
सर्वस्यैवास्य सर्गस्य धर्मतो ब्राह्मणः प्रभुरित्यादि॥

म0स्मृ0,1.93

अत एव तद्भरणमपि राज्ञा कर्त्तव्यमित्याह -

ब्राह्मणान्भर राजेंद्र पुनश्च ब्राह्मणान्भर।
तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन पुनश्च ब्राह्मणान्भरेति॥

वीप्सयोक्तम्। अन्यथा द्वेषे अनिष्टफलमपि दर्शितं यथा-

गतश्रीर्गणकं द्वेष्टि गतायुश्च चिकित्सकम्।
गतश्रीश्च गतायुश्च ब्राह्मणान् द्वेष्टि भारतेति॥

1.15 एवंस्थितेऽप्यत्यौद्धत्येनोपसंहरत्यश्वघोषः -

अस्माभिरुक्तं यदिदं द्विजानां मोहं निहंतु हतबुद्धिकानाम्।
ग्रहणन्तु संतो यदि युक्तमेतन्मुंचंत्वथाऽयुक्तमिदं यदि स्यादिति॥

अत्राश्वघोषाभिप्रायस्तूत्तान एव परंतु ब्राह्मणाक्षेपमसहमाना सरस्वतीवास्तवार्थमेवं वदति। हतबुद्धिकानां प्राप्तबुद्धीनामपीति कर्मणि षष्ठी मोहं निहंत्तुं प्रापयितुमिति णिचः अथवा प्राप्तबुद्धीनां निर्धारणे योऽस्माकं मोहो जातः तं निहंत्तुं दूरीकर्त्तुमुक्तमिति। अयं भावः। एतदाक्षेपोक्तेः केनाप्युत्तरं दीयते चेत् तद् दृष्टवाऽस्मन्मोहशांतिर्भवेदिति। एवं सदसदर्थद्वयप्रतिपादकश्लोककथनात् अश्वघोषशब्दनिर्वचने परिसंख्याविधिः स्वीकरणोचित इत्यलं पल्लवितेन। एवं श्रूयात्।

सकलकुशलसिध्यै सर्वदेवस्थलेषु व्रजतु भुवि समृद्धिं वत्सराद्युत्सवश्रीः।
अपगतभवरोगैरध्वराणां प्रयोगैरखिलशुभ कराणामस्तु भद्रं द्विजानामिति॥

ननु वज्रघोषेण स्ववज्रसूची ग्रंथांते लिखितम्। यथा-

यदा न कुरुते पापं सर्वभूतेषु दारुणम्।
कायेन मनसा वाचा ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदेति॥

एवं भूतमात्रे त्रिविधकरणैः पापाकरणे ब्रह्मप्राप्तिरिति ज्ञात्वा लिखिताऽपि

ब्राह्मणेषु वाचा ग्रंथेन। मनसा ध्यायति हि यत् तद्वाचा वदति ध्रुवमिति वेदार्थोक्तिः मनसा च निंदारूपपापमाचरितवान् संभावितस्य चाकीर्त्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यत इत्येतद्दारुणपापमेवैतदाश्चर्यमिति चेन्न। यथा भागवते 4 स्कंधे 4 अध्याये–

नाश्चर्यमेतद्यदसत्सु सर्वदा महद्विनिंदा कुणपात्मवादिषु।।
सेर्ष्यं महापुरुषपादपांसुभिर्निरस्ततेजसु तदेव शोभनमिति।। 13।।

निंदाकरणकारणं चैव। भागवते 4 स्कंधे 3 अध्याये –

पापच्यमानेन हृदाऽऽतुरेंद्रियः समृद्धिभिः पुरुषबुद्धिसाक्षिणाम्।
अकल्प एषामधिरोढुमंजसा पदं परं द्वेष्टि यथाऽसुरा हरिमिति।। 21।।

अहो भवंतोप्यतिप्राज्ञमश्वघोषमाक्षिप्तवंतः अत एतत्सर्वं भवत्सु किं न स्यादिति चेत्। उच्यते। शठे प्रतिशठं कुर्यादादरे पुनरादरमितिन्यायात् यथा तस्याक्षेपोक्तिस्तथा प्रत्युक्तिरपि लिखितेति। तथाऽपि शठे प्रतिशठं कुर्यादित्यर्थशास्त्रं सामान्यजनविषयकं सच्चेष्टितं त्वेवम्। गर्वं नोद्वहते न निंदति परान्नो भाषते निष्ठुरमुक्तं केनचिदभिप्रायेण सहते क्रोधं च नावलम्बते। श्रुत्वा काव्यमलक्षणं परकृतं संतिष्ठते मूकवत् दोषांश्छादयते स्वयं न कुरुते ह्येतत्सतां चेष्टितमिति। सत्यं परंतु संतोऽपि स्वस्मै कोप्यपराधयति चेत् सहंते न तु लोकापराधम्। यथाह भगवान् माघे –

न दूये सात्वतीसूनुर्यन्मह्यमपराध्यति।
यत्तु दंदत्यते लोकमदोदुःखाकरोति मामिति।।

एवं सामान्यलोकापराधविषये ब्राह्मणविषये तु भगवान्–

ध्नंतं शपंतं पुरुषं वदंत्तं यो ब्राह्मणं न प्रणमेद्यथाऽहम्।
स पापकृद् ब्रह्मदवाग्निदग्धो दंड्यश्च बध्यश्च न चास्मदीय इति।।

एवं सापराधब्राह्मणसांत्वन एव शासनमुक्तम्। अश्वघोषस्तु निर–पराधिब्रह्मकुलमेव द्वेष्टि असौ कथं न दंड्यः अपितु दंड्य एव। तत्रापि विप्रपीडाकरं छेद्यमंगमब्राह्मणस्य त्विति याज्ञवल्क्यस्मरणात्। अनेन वचसा पीडाकृताऽतोऽस्य जिह्वा छेद्येत्यागतं तथाऽपि क्षमया केवलमाक्षेपमात्रं कृतमतोस्मासु न दोषावकाश इति।। यथा –

बाह्यश्रुतीनामसदाग्रहाणामपक्ववाचामतिमानिनां च।
मात्सर्यमुत्सारयितुं मयोक्तं गृह्णंतु चेद्युक्तमिदं तु संतः।।

सद्व्यवहारप्रवृत्यर्थमेवेदं सर्वलेखनं परंत्वत्तश्चिंतनीयमेवम्।

सर्वेऽपि सुखिनः सन्तु संतु सर्वे निरामयाः।।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखमाप्नुयादिति।।

अतः सर्वसौख्यार्थं भगवदाशिषमाशास्महे।

सुभद्राशीः प्रदौ रम्या बालांशुकविराजितौ।
जितकामौ हरिहरौ त्राणदोश्छिन्नकद्विपू॥
पूर्णानंदैकचिद्रूपौ वशवर्तिजगत्त्रयौ॥
दद्यातां शर्मवोनश्च तिरोहितपृथग्श्नमौ॥

देशे मालवनामकेऽत्र नगरी भूपालनाम्नी शुभा तस्या अंतिशिहुर नामक पुरी यस्यामजंठाग्रणीः विल्किन्सन्निति साहिबो विजयते तस्याश्रितानां सभामध्येऽभूल्लघुटंक एष विदुषां तोषाय दोषापहः॥

नंदबाणगिरिचंद्रसंमिते शालिवाहनशकेऽयने ऽवरे॥
अश्वयुग्धवलपंचमीबुधे टंक एष खलु निर्मितो लघुः॥

इति श्रीहरिहरद्वयसुश्लोकचरणादिघटितसुवर्णादिनाम्ना समस्तब्राह्मणविद्वन्मंडली शिष्येण विरचितो वज्रसूचीलघुटंकः समाप्तः॥ श्रीरस्तु॥ शुभं भवतु॥

Appendix-II

॥ वज्रसूचिकोपनिषत् ॥

यज्ज्ञानाद्यान्ति मुनयो ब्राह्मण्यं परमाद्भुतम्।
तत्रैपदब्रह्मतत्त्वमहमस्मीति चिन्तये॥
ॐ आप्यायन्त्विति शान्तिः॥
चित्सदानन्दरूपाय सर्वधीवृत्तिसाक्षिणे।
नमो वेदान्तवेद्याय ब्रह्मणेऽनन्तरूपिणे॥
ॐ वज्रसूचीं प्रवक्ष्यामि शास्त्रमज्ञानभेदनम्।
दूषणं ज्ञानहीनानां भूषणं ज्ञानचक्षुषाम्॥1॥

ब्रह्मक्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्रा इति चत्वारो वर्णास्तेषां वर्णानां ब्राह्मण एव प्रधान इति वेदवचनानुरूपं स्मृतिभिरप्युक्तम्। तत्र चोद्यमस्ति को वा ब्राह्मणो नाम किं जीवः किं जातिः किं ज्ञानं किं कर्म किं धर्मिक इति।

तत्र प्रथमो जीवो ब्राह्मण इति चेत्तन्न। अतीतानागतानेकदेहानां जीवस्यैकरूपत्वात् एकस्यापि कर्मवशादनेकदेहसंभवात् सर्वशरीराणां जीवस्यैकरूपत्वाच्च। तस्मान्न जीवो ब्राह्मण इति।

तर्हि देहो ब्राह्मण इति चेत्तन्न। आचाण्डालादिपर्यन्तानां मनुष्याणां पांचभौतिकत्वेन देहस्यैकरूपत्वाज्जरामरणधर्माधर्मादिसाम्यदर्शनाद् ब्राह्मणः श्वेतवर्णः क्षत्रियो रक्तवर्णो वैश्यः पीतवर्णः शूद्रः कृष्णवर्ण इति नियमाभावात्। पित्रादिशरीरदहने पुत्रादीनां ब्रह्महत्यादिदोषसंभवाच्च। तस्मान्न देहो ब्राह्मण इति।

तर्हि जातिब्राह्मण इति चेत्तन्न। तत्र जात्यन्तरजन्तुष्वनेकजातिसंभवा महर्षयो बहवः सन्ति। ऋष्यशृङ्गो मृग्याः, कौशिकः कुशात्, जाम्बूको जम्बूकात्, वाल्मीको वल्मीकात्, व्यासः कैवर्तकन्यकायाम्, शशपृष्ठात् गौतमः, वसिष्ठ उर्वश्याम्, अगस्त्यः कलशे जात इति श्रुतत्वात् एतेषां जात्या विनाप्यग्रे ज्ञानप्रतिपादिता ऋषयो बहवः सन्ति। तस्मान्न जातिर्ब्राह्मण इति॥

तर्हि ज्ञानं ब्राह्मण इति चेत्तन्न। क्षत्रियादयोऽपि परमार्थदर्शिनोऽभिज्ञा बहवः सन्ति। तस्मान्न ज्ञानं ब्राह्मण इति॥

तर्हि कर्म ब्राह्मण इति चेत्तन्न। सर्वेषां प्राणिनां प्रारब्धसंचितागामिकर्मसाध-र्म्यदर्शनात्कर्माभिप्रेरिताः सन्तो जनाः क्रियाः कुर्वन्तीति। तस्मान्न कर्म ब्राह्मण इति।।

तर्हि धार्मिको ब्राह्मण इति चेत्तन्न। क्षत्रियादयो हिरण्यदातारो बहवः सन्ति। तस्मान्न धर्मिको ब्राह्मण इति।।

तर्हि को वा ब्राह्मणो नाम।

यः कश्चिदात्मानमद्वितीयं जातिगुणक्रियाहीनं षडूर्मिषड्भावेत्यादिसर्वदोषरहितं सत्यज्ञानानन्दानन्तस्वरूपं स्वयं निर्विकल्पमशेषकल्पाधरमशेषभूतान्तर्यामित्वेन वर्तमानमन्तर्बहिश्च आकाशवदनुस्यूतमखण्डानन्दस्वभावमप्रमेयमनुभवैकवेद्यमपरोक्षतया भासमानं करतलामलकवत्साक्षादपरोक्षीकृत्य कृतार्थतया कामरागादिदोषरहितः शमदमादिसंपन्नो भावमात्सर्यतृष्णाशामोहादिरहितो दम्भाहंकारादिभिरसंस्पृष्टचेता वर्तत एवमुक्तलक्षणो यः स एव ब्राह्मण इति श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणेतिहासानामभिप्रायः। अन्यथा हि ब्राह्मणत्वसिद्धिर्नास्त्येव। सच्चिदानन्दमात्मानमद्वितीयं ब्रह्म भावयेदात्मानं सच्चिदानन्दं ब्रह्म भावयेदित्युपनिषत्।।

ॐ आप्यायन्त्विति शान्तिः।।

।। इति वज्रसूच्युपनिषत्समाप्ता ।।

Appendix-III

धम्मपद

(The Definition of Brāhmaṇa)

ब्राह्मणः

ब्राह्मणो नाम अनघः

१ मातरं पितरं हन्त्वा राजानो द्वे च खत्तिये
रट्ठं सानुचरं हन्त्वा अनीघो याति ब्राह्मणो।

२ मातरं पितरं हन्त्वा राजानो द्वे च सोत्थिये
वेय्यग्घपञ्चमं हन्त्वा अनीघो याति ब्राह्मणो।

क्षमावान्

३ न ब्राह्मणस्स पहरेय्य मुञ्चेथ ब्राह्मणो
धी ब्राह्मणस्स हन्तारं ततो धी यस्स मुञ्चति।

४ न ब्राह्मणस्सेतदकिंचि सेय्यो यदा निसेधे मनसो पियेहि
यतो यतो हिंसमनो निवत्तति ततो ततो सम्मति मेव दुक्खं।

५ यस्स कायेन वाचाय मनसा नत्थि दुक्कतं
संवुतं तीहि ठानेहि तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

अविरुद्धः

६ अक्कोसं वधबन्धं च अदुट्ठो यो तितिक्खति
खन्तीबलं बलानीकं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

७ अक्कोधनं वतवन्तं सीलवन्तं अनुस्सदं
दन्तं अन्तिमसारीरं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

८ अकक्कसं विञ्ञापनिं गिरं सच्चं उदीरये
याय नाभिसजे किंचि तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

९ निधय दण्डं भूतेसु तसेसु थावरेसु च
यो न हन्ति न घातेति तमहं ब्रमि ब्राह्मणं।

१० अविरुद्धं विरुद्धेसु अत्तदण्डेसु निब्बुतं
सादानेसु अनादानं तमहं ब्रमि ब्राह्मणं।

शुचिः

११ न जटाहि न गोत्तेन न जच्चा होति ब्राह्मणो।
यम्हि सच्चं च धम्मो च सो सुची सो च ब्राह्मणो।

१२ किं ते जटाहि दुम्मेध किं ते अजिनसाटिया
अब्भन्तरं ते गहनं बाहिरं परिमज्जसि।

१३ पंसुकूलधरं जन्तुं किसं धमनिसन्थतं
एकं वनस्मिं झायन्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

१४ न नग्गचरिया न जटा न पङ्का नानासका थण्डिलसायिका वा
रजोवजल्लं उक्कुटिकप्पधनं सोधेन्ति मच्चं अवितिण्णकङ्खं।
१५ अलंकतो चे पि समं चरेय्य सन्तो दन्तो नियतो ब्रह्मचारी
सब्बेसु भूतेसु निधय दण्डं सो ब्राह्मणो सो समणो स भिक्खु।

अनादानः

१६ योध दीघं वा रस्सं वा अणुं थूलं सुभासुभं
लोके अदिन्नं नादियति तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

१७ न चाहं ब्राह्मणं ब्रूमि योनिजं मत्तिसंभवं
भोवादी नाम सो होति स चे होति सकिंचनो
अकिंचनं अनादानं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

१८ यस्स पुरे च पच्छा च मज्झे च नत्थि किंचनं
अकिंचनं अनादानं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

१९ यस्सालया न विज्जन्ति अञ्ञाय अकथंकथी
अमतोगधं अनुप्पत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२० योमं पळिपथं दुग्गं संसारं मोहमच्चगा
तिण्णो पारगतो झायी अनेजो अकथंकथी
अनुपादाय निब्बुतो तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

अनासक्तः

२१ आसा यस्स न विज्जन्ति अस्मिं लोके परम्हि च
निरासयं विसंयुत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२२ यस्स पारं अपारं वा पारापारं न विज्जति
वीतद्दरं विसंयुत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२३ सब्बसंयोजनं छेत्वा यो वे न परितस्सति
सङ्गातिगं विसंयुत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२४ छेत्वा नन्धिं वरत्तं च सन्दानं सहनुक्कमं
उक्खित्तपळिघं बुद्धं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२५ योध पुञ्ञं च पापं च उभो सङ्ग उपच्चगा
असोकं विरजं सुद्धं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२६ हित्वा मानुसकं योगं दिब्बं योगं उपच्चगा
सब्बयोगविसंयुत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।
२७ यो दुक्खस्स पजानाति इधेव खयमत्तनो
पन्नभारं विसंयुत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

क्षीण-भवः

२८ चन्दं व विमलं सुद्धं विप्पसन्नमनाविलं
नन्दीभवपरिक्खीणं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

२९ योध कामे पहत्वान अनागारो परिब्बजे
कामभवपरिक्खीणं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३० योध तण्हं पहत्वान अनागारो परिब्बजे
तण्हाभवपरिक्खीणं तमहं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३१ असंसट्ठं गहट्ठेहि अनागारेहि चूभयं
अनोकसारिं अप्पिच्छं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३२ वारि पोक्खरपत्ते व आरग्गे रिव सासपो
यो न लिम्पति कामेसु तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३३ यस्स रागो च दोसो च मानो मक्खो च पातितो
सासपोरिव आरग्गा तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३४ छिन्द सोतं परक्कम्म कामे पनुद ब्राह्मण
संखारानं खयं ञत्वा अकतञ्ञू सि ब्राह्मण।

प्राज्ञः कृतकृत्यश्च

३५ गम्भीरपञ्ञं मेधविं मग्गामग्गस्स कोविदं
उत्तमत्थमनुप्पत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३६ झायिं विरजमासीनं कतकिच्चं अनासवं
उत्तमत्थमनुप्पत्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३७ हित्वा रतिं च अरतिं च सीतिभूतं निरूपधिं
सब्बलोकाभिभुं वीरं तमहं ब्रूमि बाह्मणं।

३८ चुतिं यो वेदि सत्तानं उपपत्तिं च सब्बसो
असत्तं सुगतं बुद्धं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

३९ यस्स गतिं न जानन्ति देवा गन्धब्बमानुसा
खीणासवं अरहन्तं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

४० उसभं पवरं वीरं महेसिं विजिताविनं
अनेजं नहातकं बुद्धं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

४१ पुब्बेनिवासं यो वेदि सग्गापायं च पस्सति
अथो जातिक्खयं पत्तो अभिञ्ञावोसितो मुनि
सब्बवोसिततोसानं तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं।

Appendix-IV

The Life of Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva

{Translated from Sanskrit into Chinese by Kumārajīva, Tripitaka Master of the Later Qin Dynasty (384-417) } [1]

The Master, who was named Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva, was a disciple of Elder Pārśva. When Elder Pārśva, being deeply concerned about the Buddha-Dharma, entered samādhi in order to contemplate who was competent to renounce the world and widely propagate the teachings of the Way so as to enlighten living beings, he had a vision of a hermit heretic in Central India he ghaṇṭā (bell). If he cannot, he is not qualified to strike the ghaṇṭā in public and receive offerings from the people."

Elder Pārśva then set out from Northern India with the intention of traveling to the city of Śākya in Madhyadeśa. On his way, he met some śramaṇeras who joked with him, saying, "Virtuous Elder, let us carry your books for you." Then they took away his books and teased him in various ways for no reason. Elder Pārśva's countenance did not change and, with a placid mind, he took no notice of their mischievous tricks.

One of the śramaṇeras, who was a well-learned person, discerned that the elder was a great and farsighted man and suspected that he was no ordinary person. He questioned the elder and observed his behavior, and found that he never

1. Li RongXI, Taisho, Vol. 50, No. 2046
(Lives of Great Monks and Nuns, pp. 5-13)

ceased in his spiritual progress. [Elder Pārśva's] being was settled, his mind was deep and far-reaching, and he never thought of trivial matters.

When all the śramaṇeras realized that the elder was a man of great virtue and unfathomable magnanimity, they treated him with doubled respect and served as his attendants in order to help send him on his way.

Then Elder Pārśva disappeared by supernatural power. Upon arrivng in Central India, he stayed in a monastery. He asked the bhikṣus, "Why do you not strike the ghantā according to the Dharma?"

The bhikṣus said, "Elder Mahallka has a reason for not striking it."

"What is the reason?" asked Pārśva.

The bhikṣus replied, "there is a heretical recluse who is good at argumentaion. He announced that if none of the Buddhist śramaṇeras in the country can debate with him, they should not strike the ghantā in public to receive offerings from the people. Because of this, we do not strike the ghantā."

Elder Pārśva said, "Just strike the ghantā. If he comes, I will deal with him."

Surprised at these words, the old bhikṣus were doubtful and could not come to a decision. After assembling and dicussing the matter, they said, "Let us strike the ghantā. If the heretic comes, we will ask the elder to do whatever he pleases." Thus they struck the ghantā.

The heretic appeared and asked, "Why do you strike this piece of wood today?"

The bhikṣus replied, "An elder śramaṇa came from the north and struck the ghantā. It was not we who struck it."

The heretic said, "Ask him to come." Then Elder [Pārśva] came and met the heretic, who asked him, "Do you intend to hold a debate with me?"

"Yes," [Pārśva] replied.

The heretic said with a contemptuous smile, "The elder bhikṣu looks quite old and his words are nothing unusual. How can he hope to hold a debate with me?"

They then agreed to hold a debate in seven days' time at that spot, in the presence of the king, ministers, other great masters of the Dharma, śramaṇas, and heretics.

On the night of the sixth day, Elder Pārśva entered samādhi to contemplate what he should do. At dawn on the seventh day, a great congregation assembled. [Pārśva] arrived first and ascended the high seat, looking more cheerful and pleasant than usual. The heretic arrived later and took a seat at the front. he observed that the śramaṇa had a peaceful countenance and a quiet and calm demeanor and that his physical body possessed all the characteristics of a debater. He thought, "Is this not a saintly bhikṣu, with such a calm and pleasant presence and a physical body that has all the characteristics of a debater? Today we shall have a splendid debate."

They first discussed what punishment should be meted out to the loser. The heretic said, "The defeated person should have his tongue cut off."

Elder Pārśva said, "We must not do that. Let the defeated man become the disciple of the victor. That would be a fair enough agreement."

"Yes," replied the heretic, who then asked, "Who will speak first?"

Elder Pārśva said, "As I am advanced in age, have come from a distant place, and took my seat here before you, I should speak first."

The heretic said, "That is agreeable to me. I will refute whatever you may say."

Then Elder Pārśva said, "We should make the country

be at peace, the great king enjoy a long life, and the land rich and happy without any calamity."

The heretic remained silent, not knowing what to say. According to the rule, the one who was unable to respond lost the debate. He submitted to becoming the elder's disciple, had his head and beard shaved, became a śramaṇera, and reveived full ordination. Sitting alone at another place, he pondered, "My brilliant talents and deep knowledge have won me worldwide fame. How is it that be a few words I was defeated and made a disciple?" thinking of this, he was unhappy.

Elder [Pārśva] understood the heretic's mind, and asked him to come to his room. He demonstrated his supernatural power, performing various kinds of transformations. Then the heretic realized that his teacher was no ordinary person and was happy to be subdued by him, thinking, "It befits me to be his disciple."

The teacher said to him, "It was not easy for you to have [developed] such brilliant talents, but you have not achieved the truth. If you learn the Dharma I have acquired, the [five] organs (indriya), the [five] powers (bala), the [seven factors of] enlightenment (bodhyanga), and the [eightfold] path, and become endowed with profound and elucidative and a clear understanding of the meaning of all doctrines, you will be unrivaled in all the world."

Elder [Pārśva] then returned to his own country, while his disciple remained in Central India, where he became well versed in various sūtras and thoroughly mastered both Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings. His matchless talents in debate won him the respect and admiration of the four groups of Buddhist followers (monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen), and the king of India held him in great esteem.

Later on, the king of Minor Yuezhi in Northern India attacked Central India and besieged it for a long time. The

king of Central India dispatched a letter that read, "If you want anything from me, I will give it to you. Why should you surround and aggravate my people by staying here for such a long time?"

The [Yuezhi king] replied, "If you intend to surrender, send me three crores of golden coins and I will spare you."

The king replied, "I do not have even one crore of golden coins in the whole of my country. How can I acquire three crores of golden coins?"

The Yuezhi king replied, "You have two great treasures in your country: one is the Buddha's almsbowl, and the other is an eloquent bhikṣu. Give these to me, and they may be reckoned as equivalent to two crores of golden coins."

The king said, "I value these two treasures highly. I cannot surrender them."

Then the bhikṣu preached the Dharma to the king, saying, "Nothing in the world is comparable to the edification of living beings. The Way of the Buddha is deep and broad. It is meant to save both oneself and others. Among the virtues of a great person, the salvation of others is the greatest. Worldwide edification is difficult; a king can rule but one country. If you disseminate the Way of the Buddha, you will be a king of the Dharma across the four seas. That a bhikṣu should save people is not objectionable. Merits exist in the mind, whether one is far or near, Be magnanimous and farsighted. Why should you look only at what is before your eyes.?"

Because the king had always venerated the bhiksu, he respectfully accepted his advice and handed him over to the envoy. After the envoy of the king of Yuezhi returned to his own country, the courtiers discussed the matter and said, "It befits the king to venerate the Buddha's almsbowl. But it is too much to accept that a bhikṣu is worth a crore of golden coins, when there are so many bhikṣus everywhere under the sky."

The king ascertained that the bhikṣu was a well-learned person of superior ability and understanding who taught and benefited the people in a broad and profound manner, and whose eloquent preaching could edify even nonhuman beings. In order to remove his courtiers' doubts, he ordered that seven horses not be fed for six days. On the morning of the sixth day, he asembled all Buddhist and non-Buddhist śramaṇas of different schools and invited the bhiksu to preach the Dharma to them. All those who listened to him bedame enlightened. The king tethered the horses in front of the assembly and placed grass before them. Betel, which horses like, was also placed in the fodder. With tears flowing, the horses listened to the [bhikṣu's] preaching without any thought of eating the fodder.

Thus everyone knew that the bhikṣu was no ordinary person. Because even horses could understand his words, he was named Aśvaghoṣa (Horses Cry) Boddhisattva. He propagated Buddhism widely in Northern India to teach and benefit all living beings. As he knew well how to use expedient means to help people achieve merit, he won the respect of the four groups of Buddhist followers. All acclaimed that day as a day of merit.

End of the Life
of
Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva

Appendix-V
Condemnation of Jāti in Mahābhārata and Purāṇas

Mahābhārata

सत्यं दानं क्षमा शीलमानृशंस्यं तपो घृणा।
यत्रैतल्लक्ष्यते सर्वं स ब्राह्मण इति स्मृतः।।

महाभारत, वनपर्व, 180/21.

जातिरत्र महासर्प मनुष्यत्वे महामते।
सङ्करात्सर्ववर्णानां दुष्परीक्ष्येति मे मतिः।
सर्वे सर्वास्वपत्यानि जनयन्ति सदा नराः।।

80/32-32

वाङ्मैथुनमथ जन्म मरणञ्च समं नृणाम्।।

180/32.

सत्यं दमस्तपो दानमहिंसा धर्मनित्यता।
साधकानि सदा पुंसा न जातिर्न कुलं नृप।।

181/42-43.

न कुलेन न जात्या वा क्रियाभिर्ब्राह्मणो भवेत्।
चण्डालोऽपि हि वृत्तस्थो ब्राह्मणो यक्षपुङ्गव।।
श्रृणु यक्ष कुलं तात न स्वाध्यायो न च श्रुतम्।
कारणं हि द्विजत्वे तु वृत्तमेव न संशयः।।

313/108.

न योनिर्नापि संस्कारो न श्रुतं नापि सन्ततिः।
कारणानि द्विजत्वस्य वृत्तमेव तु कारणम्।।

अनु०पर्व, 143/50

निर्गुणं निर्मलं ब्रह्म यत्र तिष्ठति स द्विजः।
अनु॰, 143-52

शूद्रे चैतद्भवेल्लक्ष्यं द्विजे तच्च न विद्यते।
न वै शूद्रो भवेच्छूद्रो ब्राह्मणो न च ब्राह्मणः।।
180/25-26

काम क्रोधे भयं लोभः शोकश्चिन्ता क्षुध श्रमः।
सर्वेषां नः प्रभवति कस्माद्वर्णो विभिद्यते।।
स्वेदमूत्रपुरीषाणि श्लेष्मा पित्तं सशोणितम्।
तनुः क्षरति सर्वेषां कस्माद्वर्णो विभज्यते।।
शान्ति-पर्व, 188/7-8.

न विशेषोऽस्ति वर्णानां सर्वं ब्राह्ममिदं जगत्।
ब्रह्मणा पूर्वसृष्टं हि कर्मभिर्वर्णतां गतम्।।
188/10

सर्वे वर्णा ब्राह्मणा ब्रह्मजाश्च,
सर्वे नित्यं व्याहरन्ते स्म ब्रह्म।
तत्त्वं शास्त्रं ब्रह्मबुद्ध्या ब्रवीमि
सर्व विश्वं ब्रह्म चैतत्समस्तम्।।
शान्ति-पर्व, 318/89.

न सुखादौ न चैश्वर्ये नाज्ञायां नो भयेष्वपि।
न वीर्ये नाकृतौ नाक्षे न व्यापारे न चायुषि।।
नाङ्गे पुष्टे न दौर्बल्ये न स्थैर्ये नापि चापले।
.... यां न वैराग्ये न धर्मे न पराक्रमे।।
न त्रिवर्गे न नैपुण्ये न रूपादौ न भेषजे।
न स्त्रीगर्भे न गमने न देहमलसंप्लवे।।
नास्थिरन्ध्रे न च प्रेम्णि न प्रमाणे न लोमसु।
शूद्रब्राह्मणयोर्भेदो मृग्यमाणोऽपि यत्नतः।
नेक्ष्यते सर्वधर्मेषु संहतैस्त्रिदशैरपि।।
पादप्रचारैस्तनुवर्णकेशैः सुखेन दुःखेन च शोणितेन।
त्वङ्मांसमेदोऽस्थिरसैः समानाश्चतुःप्रभेदा हि कथं भवन्ति।।
वर्णप्रमाणाकृतिगर्भवासवाग्बुद्धिकर्मेन्द्रियजीवितेषु।
बलत्रिवर्गामयभेषजेषु न विद्यते जातिकृतो विशेषः।।
41/35-43.

एकवर्णमिदं ....शूद्रात्प्रत्यवरो भवेत्।

अनुपर्व, 108/13.

शूद्रोऽप्यागमसम्पन्नो द्विजो भवति संस्कृतः।
ब्राह्मणोऽप्यसद्वृत्तः ...... शूद्रो भवति तादृशः।।

143/46-47.

यस्तु शूद्रो दमे सत्ये धर्मे च सततोत्थितः।
तमहं ब्राह्मणं मन्ये वृत्तेन हि भवेद् द्विजः।।

216/15.

चतुर्वेदोऽपि दुर्वृत्तो न शूद्रादतिरिच्यते।।

313/111.

वृत्तेस्थितस्तु शूद्रोऽपि ब्राह्मणत्वं नियच्छति।।

अनु॰, 143/51.

न वै शूद्रो भवेच्छूद्रो ब्राह्मणो न च ब्राह्मणः।

वन-पर्व, 180/25-26

जीवितं यस्य धर्मार्थं धर्मो ह्यर्थमेव च।
अहोरात्रश्च पुण्यार्थं तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः।।

शान्ति-पर्व, 245/23.

न क्रुध्येन्न प्रहृष्येच्च मानितोऽमानितश्च यः।
सर्वभूतेष्वभयदस्तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः।। प्इपक, 245/14.
निर्मुक्तं बन्धनैः सर्वैस्तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः।

245/24.

अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यः सर्वेषामभयं यतः।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतो यस्तं देवा ब्राह्मणं विदुः।। 269/33.
सत्यं दानमथाद्रोहमानृशंस्यं तपो घृणा।
दृश्यन्ते यत्र नागेन्द्र स ब्राह्मण इति स्मृतः।।

वन-पर्व, 180/21

IN PURĀṆAS

गोवर्गमध्यं न गतो यथाश्वो निर्धर्यते ज्ञैः सुविचक्षणत्वात्।
मनुष्यभावादविशिष्यमाणस्तद्वद् द्विजः शूद्रगणान्न भिन्नः।।

भविष्य-ब्राह्म॰, 40/20.

किं ब्राह्मणा ये सुकृतं त्यजन्ति किं क्षत्रिया लोकमपालयन्तः।
स्वधर्महीना हि तथैव वैश्याः शूद्राः स्वमुख्यक्रियया विहीनाः।।
तस्मान्न गोऽश्ववत्कश्चिज्जातिभेदोऽस्ति देहिनाम्।
कार्यशक्तिनिमित्तस्तु संकेतः कृत्रिमो भवेत्।।

भविष्य, ब्राह्म॰, 40/33-34.

वेदाध्ययनमप्येतद् ब्राह्मण्यं प्रतिपद्यते।
विंप्रवद्वैश्यराजन्यौ राक्षसा रावणादयः।।
श्वादचाण्डालदासाश्च लुब्धकाभीरधीवराः।
येऽन्येऽपि वृषलाः केचित्तेऽपि वेदानधीयते।।
शूद्रा देशान्तरं गत्वा ब्राह्मण्यं क्षत्रियं श्रिताः।
व्यापाराकारभाषाद्यैर्विप्रतुल्याः प्रकल्पिताः।।
वेदानधीत्य वेदौ वा वेदं वाऽपि यथाक्रमम्।
प्रोद्वहन्ति शुभां कन्यां शुद्धब्राह्मणजां नराः।
अथवाधीत्य वेदांस्तु क्षत्रवैश्यास्तु वा नराः।
गौडपूर्वां कृतामीयुर्जातिं वा दाक्षिणात्यजाम्।।
अपरिज्ञातशूद्रत्वाद् ब्राह्मण्यं यान्ति कामतः।।
तस्मान्न ज्ञायते भेदो वेदाध्यायक्रियाकृतः।।

भविष्य, ब्राह्म॰, 41/1-6.

चत्वार एकस्य पितुः सुताश्च, तेषां सुतानां खलु जातिरेका।

भविष्य-ब्राह्म॰, 41/45.

फलान्यथोदुम्बरवृक्षजातेर्यथाग्रमध्यान्तभवानि जानि।
वर्णाकृतिस्पर्शरसैः समानि तथैकता जातेरिति प्रचिन्त्यम्।।

भविष्य-ब्राह्म॰, 41/46.

पृथिव्युदकवाय्वग्नि-परिणामाविशेषतः।
देहतः सर्वभूतानां ब्राह्मत्वप्रसङ्गतः।।
तस्मान्न देहे ब्राह्मण्यं नापि देहात्मकं भवेत्।।
वर्णापसद-चाण्डालश्वादादीनां प्रसज्यते।

भविष्य, ब्राह्म॰, 41/53-56.

हरिणीगर्भसम्भूत ऋष्यश्रृङ्गो महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातस्तस्माज्जातिरकारणम्।।
श्वपाकीगर्भसम्भूतः पिता व्यासस्य पार्थिव।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातः ....।।
उलूकीगर्भसम्भूतः कणादाख्यो महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातः ....।।
गणिकागर्भसम्भूतो वसिष्ठश्च महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातः ....।।
नाविकागर्भसम्भूतो मन्दपालो महामुनिः।
तपसा ब्राह्मणो जातः ....।।

भविष्य, ब्राह्म॰, 42/26-30.

हेयोपादेयतत्त्वज्ञास्त्यक्तन्यायपथागमाः।
जितेन्द्रियमनोवाचः सदाचारपरायणाः।।1।।
नियमाचारवृत्तस्था हितान्वेषणतत्पराः।
संसाररक्षणोपायक्रियायुक्तमनोरथाः।।2।।
सम्यग्दर्शनसम्पन्नाः समाधिस्था हतक्रुधः।
स्वाध्यायभक्तहृदयास्त्यक्तसङ्गा विमत्सराः।।3।।
विशोका विमदाः शान्ताः सर्वप्राणिहितैषिणः।
सुखदुःखसमालोका विविक्तस्थानवासिनः।।4।।
व्रतोपयुक्तसर्वाङ्गा धर्मिकाः पापभीरवः।
निर्ममा निरहङ्कारा दानशूरा दयापराः।।5।।
सत्यब्रह्मविदः शान्ता सर्वशास्त्रेषु निष्ठिताः।।6।।
....ब्रह्मणा कृतमर्यादास्त एव ब्राह्मणाः स्मृताः।।7।।
योगस्तपो दया दानं सत्यं धर्मश्रुतिर्घृणा।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यमेतद् ब्राह्मणलक्षणम्।।28।।
यत्र वा तत्र वा वर्णे उत्तमाधममध्यमाः।
निवृत्तः पापकर्मेभ्यो ब्राह्मणः स विधीयते।।30।।
शूद्रोऽपि शीलसम्पन्नो ब्राह्मणादधिको भवेत्।
ब्राह्मणो विगताचारः शूद्राद् हीनतरो भवेत्।।31।।

भविष्य, ब्राह्म॰, 44.

पुत्रो गृत्समदस्यापि शुनको यस्य शौनका:।
ब्राह्मणा: क्षत्रियाश्चैव वैश्या: शूद्रास्तथैव च।।

हरिवंश 29/8

वत्सस्य वत्सभूमिस्तु भार्गभूमिस्तु भार्गवात्।
एते त्वङ्गिरस: पुत्रा जाता वंशेऽथ भार्गवे।
ब्राह्मणा: क्षत्रिया वैश्या: शूद्राश्च भरतर्षभ।।

हरिवंश, 29/85-86

मनो....र्नाभागनेदिष्टकरुषपृषध्राख्या: पुत्रा: बभूवु:। पृषध्रस्तुगुरुगोवधत्शूद्रत्वमगमत्। करुषात्कारुषा महाबला: क्षत्रिया बभूवु:। .... नेदिष्टपुत्रस्तु वैश्यतामगमत्

विष्णुपुराण, 4/1/5-15;

गर्गाच्छिनिस्ततो गार्ग्या: शैन्या:। क्षत्रोपेता द्विजातयो बभूवु:।

4/19/9

मुद्गलाच्च मौद्गल्या: क्षत्रोपेता द्विजातयो बभूवु:।।

4/19/16

अप्रतिरथात्कण्वस्तस्यापि मेधतिथि:।
यतो काण्वायना द्विजा बभूवु:।। 4/19/2, 10.

एक एव पुरावेद: प्रणव: सर्ववाङ्मय:।
देवो नारायणो नान्य एकोऽग्निर्वर्ण एव च।।

भागवत, 9/14/48.

शमो दमस्तप: शौचं सन्तोष: क्षान्तिरार्जवम्।
ज्ञानं दयाच्युतात्मत्वं सत्यं च ब्रह्मलक्षणम्।।
भागवत, 7/11/21

सत्यं ब्रह्म यथाभूतं ब्रवन्तो ब्राह्मणाश्च ये।। वायुपुराण, 8/163.

निर्ममो निरहङ्कारो निरपेक्षो निराशिष:।
निराश: सर्वभूतेषु निराशीर्निष्परिग्रह:।।
न सुवृत्तं न दुर्वृत्तं वेद कश्चित्स ब्राह्मण:।।

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